

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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Patriots coach Bill Belichick

Volume 2, No. 279 © SS 2005 MIDEAST EDITION

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 2005

# Graner found guilty of Abu Ghraib abuse

Convicted GI takes stand in penalty phase; could get 15 years Page 3



Fox photos

Army Reserve Capt. DeLisa Stiles was transformed into "The Swan" on Fox's makeover show.

## Soldier to 'Swan'

**Army captain regains confidence, femininity through TV makeover odyssey**

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## News Tracker ... What's new with old news

### Military

**Missile defense system:** The Pentagon may never publicly declare that its new missile defense system is fully ready to defend against long-range missiles aimed at the United States, but it already has a limited capability against a small-scale attack, a Pentagon official said Thursday.

The Bush administration's goal was to activate the system by the end of 2004.

"We haven't made a declaration that we are now hereby operational," said Larry Di Rita, spokesman for Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld. "I don't know that such a declaration will ever be made."

At some point, the interceptor missiles will be placed on permanent alert—a condition in which they will be capable of being fired from their silos at any time of day or night, on short notice.

**Military recruiters at schools:** The Justice Department said it will ask the Supreme Court to overturn an appeals court's ruling that would allow colleges and universities to limit the activities of military recruiters on their campuses without fear of losing federal funding.

Government lawyers also asked the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Friday to stay enforcement of its ruling until the Supreme Court decides whether or not to take the case.

Immediate implementation of the ruling, they argued, could harm the nation's military readiness by making it harder to hire the huge teams of lawyers needed for issues related to operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

### Nation

**Robert Blake trial:** An expert witness said he did not find any blood on the clothing that Robert Blake wore the night his wife was shot to death, but prosecutors said that doesn't eliminate the actor as a suspect.

Rod Englert, a crime scene reconstructionist, testified he was asked to analyze Blake's clothes and those of Bonnie Lee Blakey to determine the blood patterns left by two gunshot wounds to her head and shoulder.

He said Friday that he did numerous tests on the actor's clothes and found not a speck of blood on his T-shirt, jeans, boots, socks or belt.

**Vibe Awards fight:** The rapper Young Buck pleaded not guilty Friday to an assault charge for allegedly stabbing a man during a melee at the Vibe Awards after Dr. Dre was punched.

The 23-year-old Buck, whose given name is David Darnell Brown, is accused of stabbing Jimmy James Johnson in retaliation after Johnson allegedly punched Dr. Dre, Brown's mentor, during the Nov. 15 taping of the show.

**Faith-based grants:** A judge has blocked the Bush administration from providing future "faith-based" grants to an Arizona mentoring center that injected religion into its publicly funded programs.

The ruling is the first time a judge has struck down a grant through the president's faith-based initiative, which seeks to give religious groups equal footing in seeking federal grants to provide social services.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services cut off funds to MentorKids USA in December after evidence showed the group used public money to diversify support activities such as worship or religious instruction.

**Chicago nightclub shooting:** A bouncer who was shot at a nightclub after a patron was denied entry is the third victim to die from his injuries, authorities said.

Eugene Walker, 24, died Thursday night, said the Cook County medical examiner's of-



**Marine shot by police:** Julia and Tomas Raya, parents of Andres Raya, embrace as they arrive at Lakewood Memorial Park in Hughson, Calif., on Friday for a funeral service for their son. Raya, a young Marine whose family said he feared returning to Iraq, was killed by police after he shot and killed an officer and wounded another, and authorities said they are investigating the case as a "suicide by cop." Raya, 19, was killed Sunday after he initiated a second gunfight with police as they pursued him for the earlier shooting, authorities said.

fice.

Police continue to investigate the Saturday shooting that began when a patron was denied entry into Cafe Allure.

**N.Y. gay marriage case:** Attorneys for 25 same-sex couples seeking the right to marry said Friday that New York's opposition to gay marriage is akin to the mentality that once allowed slavery and discrimination against women and minorities.

"The basis of [the state's] opposition is that it goes against tradition. If tradition carried on, we would still have slavery," said Mariette Goldenhuys, one of the attorneys for the same-sex couples that have been dubbed the "Itasca 50."

The 25 couples applied for marriage licenses early in 2004 and were turned down by the Itasca city clerk, who was following a state Health Department advisory not to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

**Sept. 11 fraud case:** A man who collected \$68,000 by falsely claiming his domestic partner died in the 2001 terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center has pleaded guilty to grand theft.

Patric Henn, 29, entered his plea Wednesday, without a deal from prosecutors. He admitted making up the story to steal from the American Red Cross.

Henn could face up to 15 years in prison at sentencing scheduled for Jan. 19.

**WTC funding:** Developer Larry Silverstein was given authorization Tuesday by the New York City Industrial Development Agency to borrow an additional \$75 million through tax-exempt Liberty Bonds for the World Trade Center project, which is set to open next year.

Two years ago, Silverstein won preliminary approval for \$400 million in Liberty bonds, but had to come back to the agency because of higher interest costs and a lower insurance payout than he expected.

Silverstein, who also holds the commercial lease on the main World Trade Center site is expected to return to ask for \$3.5 billion more in Liberty Bonds for other office towers planned for the site.

### World

**China, Taiwan charter flights:** China and Taiwan struck a deal Saturday to allow the first direct flights between the rivals in five decades—a major breakthrough that could help reduce tensions in one of Asia's most dangerous potential flash points.

The agreement allows a total 48

round-trip charter flights to carry Taiwanese working in China home and back during the Chinese New Year holiday next month, Chinese negotiator Pu Zhaozhou told reporters.

Taiwan has banned the direct flights since the Communists won a bloody civil war in 1949 and took over the mainland.

**Estrada returns to Philippines:** Former President Joseph Estrada, who is on trial for corruption, returned to Manila on Saturday—following the orders of the anti-graft court that let him go to Hong Kong for knee replacement surgery.

Police hustled Estrada from the airport to an adjacent air force base, from which a private helicopter took him to the rest house across the capital where he'd been held without trial.

About 200 of the former movie star's supporters lined a street near the airport, carrying his picture and holding up a banner reading, "Welcome home, Mr. President."

**N. Korea nuclear talks:** The head of a U.S. congressional delegation said Saturday he was encouraged by North Korea's apparent readiness to return to talks on its nuclear programs, and called meetings with North officials more positive than expected.

"They are ready to get back to substantive discussions," Republican Rep. Curt Weldon said in Beijing. "Nothing is off the table."

Weldon said they met with North Korea's No. 2 leader, Kim Yong Nam, Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun, and Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan during their three-day visit.

The United States, North and South Korea, China, Japan and Russia have struggled for months to convene a fourth round of talks to persuade Pyongyang to give up its nuclear programs. Previous rounds held in Beijing, ended without breakthroughs.

### War on terrorism

**Gitmo review tribunals:** U.S. military review tribunals have ordered 13 more detainees to remain in custody at the camp for terrorist suspects in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, an official said Friday.

Review tribunals determined the men were correctly classified as "enemy combatants," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Darryl Borgquist, a Pentagon spokesman.

The Combatant Status Review Tribunals have ordered only two prisoners released or transferred to other countries from the U.S. Naval base. Another 254 have been ordered to remain in detention, including the latest 13.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

# Granger guilty of Abu Ghraib abuse

## GI takes stand and says he was ordered to abuse prisoners

By T.A. BADGER  
The Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — Army Spc. Charles Granger Jr., the suspected ringleader of the Abu Ghraib prison abuse, took the stand for the first time Saturday and said he was ordered by interrogators to physically mistreat and sexually humiliate prisoners.

Speaking a day after his conviction for the abuse, Granger described himself as a by-the-book prison guard who was corrupted by higher-ranking soldiers.

He said he initially resisted pressure to mistreat prisoners, but his Army superiors made it clear to him that he was expected to obey the commands of the military and civilian intelligence agents who ran his part of Abu Ghraib.

Granger said a lieutenant in his unit told him, "If [military intelligence] asks you to do this, it needs to be done. They're in charge, follow their orders."

Granger, a 36-year-old reservist from Uniontown, Pa., was convicted Friday of abusing Iraqi detainees in a case that sparked international outrage when photographs were released that showed reservists smiling and laughing as they humiliated prisoners.

He did not testify during the 4½-day trial, but took the stand Saturday as his sentencing hearing resumed.

The first soldier to be court-martialed in the scandal, Granger was convicted of all five charges and faces up to 15 years behind bars.

Four other soldiers have pleaded guilty in the case, and three others are awaiting trial.

Granger's verdict came in less than five days of deliberations after a trial in which prosecutors depicted him as a sadistic soldier who took great pleasure in seeing detainees suffer.

"It was for sport," he laughs, prosecutor Capt. Chris Graveline told jurors in his closing argument Friday.

"What we have here is plain abuse. There is no justification."

A jury of four Army officers and six senior enlisted men rejected Granger's defense that he was following orders at Abu Ghraib, but he revived that rationale Saturday.

He said he now knows that those orders were unlawful, but "at the time, my under-



Army Spc. Charles Granger Jr. walks through a crowd Friday at Fort Hood, Texas, after he was convicted of abusing Iraqi detainees. Granger, the first soldier to be court-martialed in the scandal, was convicted of all five charges and faces up to 15 years behind bars.

standing is that they were [lawful], or I wouldn't have done them," he said.

Granger spoke for nearly three hours as an "unsworn statement," meaning he was not subjected to cross-examination by prosecutors.

He finished up his statement by saying, "I didn't enjoy what I did there. ... A lot of it was wrong, a lot of it was criminal."

Given the choice between prison time or a dishonorable discharge, he said he'd rather serve a term behind bars.

"I still want to be a part of the Army," he said.

"Do you think you have anything to offer?" asked his lawyer, Guy Womack.

"I think I do," Granger responded.

Labeled the ringleader of a band of abusive guards at Abu Ghraib, Granger admitted "terrorizing" prisoners believed to have valuable information in order to inform them for interrogators.

One of the notorious photographs that ignited the Abu Ghraib scandal shows Granger preparing to punch a hooded detainee, while an-

other shows him smiling while posing behind a pyramid of naked prisoners.

He said the intelligence agents used a variety of methods to fatigue and stress the prisoner, like keeping them in isolation, depriving them of sleep and food, shining bright lights in their eyes and yelling and screaming in their face.

Other photos used as evidence against Granger showed prisoners hooded and handcuffed to their cells, one being led around on a leash and a group of prisoners masturbating and simulating oral sex.

"A lot of the off-the-wall stuff was from civilian interrogators, but also some of the craziness came from a lot of the soldiers who were the military handlers," he said, adding that the photos were an expression of dark humor arising from extreme stress.

Womack asked him why he was smiling in those photos, some of which were shown while Granger spoke.

"I'm smiling now, and that's a nervous smile," Granger said.

"There was a lot of things that we did that were so screwed up, if you didn't look at them as funny, there was no way to deal with it."

His mother, Irma, who testified Friday in the sentencing phase, described her son as a kind and gentle man who faithfully served his country.

"He is not the monster he's made out to be," she said quietly.

"In my eyes, he'll always be a hero."

## GI convicted of murder in shooting of injured Iraqi

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A U.S. military judge convicted an Army sergeant of murder Friday for the alleged mercy killing of a severely injured Iraqi teenager, and sentenced him to a year's imprisonment.

Staff Sgt. Cardenas J. Alban of Inglewood, Calif., is the second soldier convicted of shooting the wounded 16-year-old as U.S. forces battled an uprising in Baghdad's Shiite Muslim stronghold of Sadr City in August.

Witnesses say U.S. soldiers found the teenager in a burning truck apparently set alight by fighting.

The Americans decided severe burns and abdominal wounds put the teenager beyond help and that "the best course of action was to put [the victim] out of his misery," a criminal investigator has said.

A judge convicted Alban of murder and conspiracy to commit murder during a one-day hearing Friday in Baghdad, the military said in a statement.

He was sentenced to one year's confinement in civilian life, and a bad-conduct discharge.

Staff Sgt. Johnny M. Horne Jr., also with the Fort Riley, Kan.-based 41st Infantry regiment, was sentenced in December to three years in prison after pleading guilty in the same killing.

Separately, Army Capt. Rogelio Maymulet of Chicago faces a Feb. 22 court-martial in Germany for allegedly shooting and killing a man who was gravely wounded when U.S. fighters opened fire on his vehicle last May south of Baghdad.

A fellow officer told a preliminary military hearing that dispatching the wounded man was "the compassionate response" on Maymulet's part.

Rights groups criticize the court-martials for illegal killings of Iraqis, saying the slayings violate international law and should be tried as war crimes.

Critics also accuse the U.S. military of hazy training on the rules of engagement that they say contributes to the illegal killing of civilians.

## Justice Department investigating FBI for alleged abuse at Guantanamo

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department inspector general is investigating whether FBI agents abused detainees at a U.S. military prison in Iraq and at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

There has been no evidence made public that FBI agents did anything at Guantanamo other than observe prisoner interrogations that one Justice Department official called "highly aggressive."

The agents themselves described the questioning in memos and a high-ranking FBI official complained to Defense De-

partment lawyers in January 2003 about a pattern of abusive techniques.

Similarly, the FBI has not been implicated in allegations of abuse at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

But in a Jan. 4 letter to Democratic lawmakers on the House Judiciary Committee who requested an investigation of incidents at Guantanamo Bay, Glenn Fine, the inspector general, said his office has "begun examining the involvement of Federal Bureau of Investigation staff in either observing or participating in the alleged abuse of detainees at the Guantanamo facility and at Abu Ghraib."

The Pentagon last week announced its own investigation into the allegations raised in the FBI memos. The documents were made public by the American Civil Liberties Union, which obtained them from the FBI under the Freedom of Information Act.

"We welcome the inspector general's review," Cassandra Chandler, assistant FBI director for public affairs, said Friday.

Twenty-six agents reported observing detainee mistreatment by non-FBI personnel. Nine reported incidents have been re-

ferred to the Pentagon for follow-up, the FBI said.

Documents published last month show FBI agents warned the government about abuse and mistreatment when the first prisoners arrived in Cuba in 2002, about a year before the scandal at the Abu Ghraib prison.

The techniques included grabbing a detainee's genitals and bending back his thumbs, gagging a prisoner with duct tape and using a dog to intimidate a detainee who later was thrown into isolation and showed signs of "extreme psychological trauma."



Iraqi volunteers paste electoral posters at a wall in Baghdad on Saturday.

# Iraq to allow for some same-day registration

## Citing security concerns, election officials allow changes in Anbar, Ninevah provinces

BY JASON KEYSER  
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraqis in two of the country's most troubled provinces will be permitted to register and vote on the day of elections, the head of Iraq's electoral commission said Saturday.

Commission Chairman Abdul-Hussein Hendawi also said he expected a same-day preliminary vote count. Tallying final results from the Jan. 30 elections could take as long as 10 days.

In the face of increasing concerns about security during the election period, authorities have agreed to let voters register and cast ballots on the same day in Anbar and Ninevah provinces, Hendawi said.

The two provinces, home to restive cities like Fallujah and Mosul, have suffered frequent insurgent strikes and deadly clashes involving U.S. forces, raising questions about whether voting will be able to proceed in parts of those areas.

In an apparent bid to head off car bombings on election day, Iraqi authorities will restrict the use of automobiles throughout the country and will place security cordons around polling stations, a Cabinet minister said Saturday.

Provincial Affairs minister Wael Abdel-Latif gave no details on how cars would be restricted, but security sources have said authorities are considering banning the use of private vehicles Jan. 29-31.

Abdel-Latif also pledged that the government of Prime Minister Ayad Allawi would provide adequate security for voters, but he acknowledged that the security situation in four of the country's 18 provinces was unstable.

Iraqi security forces will shoulder the prime responsibility for protecting voters on election day, but the U.S.-led multinational force will provide support if asked, Abdel-Latif said.

Some 14 million Iraq residents are eligi-

ble to vote in the election for a 275-seat legislature that will run the country, draft a permanent constitution and choose a president and prime minister.

Another 1.2 million eligible Iraqi voters living abroad can cast ballots in 14 countries, including the United States, Iran, Syria, Britain and Sweden.

A violent intimidation campaign by insurgents has kept voter registrations light in areas north and west of the capital. In particular, rebels have gunned down election officials and members of the U.S.-trained Iraqi forces.

Iraqis wanting to vote in Iraq's 16 other provinces will have to register ahead of time, as planned, Hendawi said.

Meanwhile, a local government building in the city of Ramadi was hit with rocket-propelled grenades, and groups of armed men were seen roaming the streets of the city, where markets and shops were shuttered. There was no immediate word on casualties.

Baghdad University Vice President Nihad Mohammed al-Rawi escaped an assassination attempt Saturday by gunmen who fired on his car in the city's Jadriyah neighborhood, security officials said. One of his bodyguards was wounded, the officials said on condition of anonymity.

Killings of Iraq's intellectuals and professionals were common after the March 2003 invasion but had dropped off in recent months.

Also, 15 Iraqi soldiers were still missing after insurgents pulled them off a public bus Friday in the latest assault on Iraqi security forces. Rebels stopped the bus, screened its passengers for the Iraqi security troops and set the vehicle ablaze.

In another development Saturday, the Defense Ministry confirmed a report in a major Arabic daily that an Iraqi woman trained by members of Saddam Hussein's regime in Syria tried to assassinate the defense minister but fainted before carrying out her mission.

# More attacks, fewer poll workers plague Mosul, a model of pre-election Iraq

BY LOUISE ROUG  
Los Angeles Times

MSUL, Iraq — On a recent morning, a swarm of helicopters brought American and Albanian soldiers here to lock down Mosul airport.

A few hours later, U.S. Ambassador John Negroponte and top American military commanders, Gen. George Casey and Lt. Gen. Thomas Metz, arrived to meet with Iraqi election officials. Introductions didn't take long. The commission overseeing elections in Iraq's third-largest city currently numbers two people.

Although U.S. officials insist elections will take place, there are significant hurdles to overcome before the Jan. 30 poll. Mosul, an important city of 1.8 million people, has become so volatile that American soldiers who work on community projects no longer maintain contact with the local population. On city streets, no posters or fliers advertise the election, but leaflets threaten beatings for those who vote.

After the resignation of the entire election staff last month, the local government now has two weeks to recruit and train 800 election workers needed to work at polling sites throughout the province.

"We're starting from scratch," said Maj. Tony Cruz of the 426 Civil Affairs Battalion, charged with recruiting and training election workers

here, killing 15 U.S. soldiers and seven Iraqis. The attack was the deadliest on an American installation in Iraq.

American military commanders, who have been trying to "win hearts and minds" here, suffered a major setback last week when a U.S. warplane bombed the wrong house in Anbar, about 30 miles south of Mosul, killing as many as 14 people.

In the fall, the civil affairs unit employed about 20 local translators. But with death threats and intimidation, only five remain.

Some soldiers say attacks have declined slightly in the last two weeks. In late December, the U.S. military captured two people whom the military identified as key members of Jordanian militant Abu Musab Zarqawi's network. The men had been plotting attacks in the city, military officials said.

Brig. Gen. Carter Ham, commander of Task Force Olympia in Mosul, has referred to the U.S. military as "Khalid, Khaled, Kazer and Ahmed Ali," as the most important people in the province because they will coordinate the voter drive and oversee elections.

At the airport meeting, Khazer and Ali, two former soldiers in their late twenties, spoke at length to the U.S. generals and officials. Starting Saturday, local media will feature get-out-the-vote ads and recruitment drives for election workers, said Kazer, whose wife is involved in the election effort.

**"We're starting from scratch."**

**Maj. Tony Cruz**  
426 Civil Affairs Battalion,  
charged with recruiting and  
training election workers

evah, which includes Mosul, and Anbar, which includes Fallujah.

Located near significant oil reserves, Mosul is the capital of Nineveh province, which borders Syria. The city sits at a border between Arabs and Kurds who control areas to the north. Sunni Muslims compose about half the population.

Violence has escalated since the assassination of the provincial governor in July. After November's battle in Fallujah, U.S. commanders say insurgents sought refuge in Baghdad and Mosul.

That month, there were uprisings in Mosul and key areas, including a police station takeover. Thousands of Iraqi police officers deserted. In late December, a suicide bomber wrapped in explosives detonated inside a mess hall at a military base

here, killing 15 U.S. soldiers and seven Iraqis. The attack was the deadliest on an American installation in Iraq.

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# U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, at least 1,360 members of the U.S. military had died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,071 died as a result of hostile actions, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is two higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 p.m. Friday.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,222 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 992 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A soldier with the 1st Infantry division was killed Thursday near Mosul.

■ A soldier was killed Thursday by a roadside bomb in Mosul.

■ Two Marines were killed Thursday in Anbar province.

The latest identifications reported by military:

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Matthew W. Hallway, 21, of El Paso, Texas, and Marine Lance Cpl. Juan Rodrigo Rodriguez-Velasco, 21, of El Centro, Texas; killed Thursday in an explosion in Anbar province; assigned to the Marine Reserve's 1st Battalion, 23rd Regiment, 4th Marine Division, Campus Christi.

■ Army Sgt. 1st Class Brian A. Mack, 36; Phoenix; killed Thursday in an explosion in Mosul; assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash.

■ Army Pfc. Gunnar D. Becker, 19, Forestburg, S.D.; died Thursday in Mosul of non-combat injuries; assigned to 2nd Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Vilsack, Germany.



# Recent rain may signal end of Afghan drought

BY KEVIN DOUGHERTY

Stars and Stripes

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Recent rains in Afghanistan have some people wondering if the drought that has bedeviled the nation for years is ending.

In the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, about 3 1/4 inches of rain fell in Kandahar over a two-day period, said Air Force Staff Sgt. Wes Brogan, a meteorologist with the 25th Air Support Operational Squadron. The rest of the week saw traces of precipitation.

"We got hit with a massive low-pressure system that stalled out over Afghanistan," said Brogan, who is assigned to Kandahar Air Base. "It passed really slowly, and it took a long time to move out."

Rainfall for December was four times the normal amount for the month.

More rain and snow fell last week in southern and eastern Afghanistan, the region hardest hit by the seven-year drought. Over to the west, the city of Herat got drenched with about 6 inches of snow Thursday.

Military forecasters in Afghanistan have asked the Air Force Combat Climatology Center in Asheville, N.C., whether all this precipitation means the end of the drought. They at least want to know if wetter days are ahead, beyond the coming rainy season, which is typically March and April.

The late-December storm hit "pretty much everywhere, but I think we got the worst of it," said Air Force Capt. Jodi Bergen, commander of the Kandahar weather unit.

North of Kandahar Air Base, the Tamak River rose so high the water was nearly touching the bottom of the main bridge leading into town.

Meanwhile, near Kabul, rainwater filled



Courtesy of U.S. Air Force

**Above: It's a sight that isn't seen often in Afghanistan — water flooding an area, the result of recent rainfall in Kandahar. Right: Afghan men walk in a muddy alley during a snow shower in the center of Kabul on Thursday. With temperatures well below freezing, Afghanistan welcomes the snowfall in drought-stricken regions.**

some smaller streams that are usually bone-dry this time of year.

Afghans say "this is a sign from God," said Khoshhal Murad, a United Nations interpreter in Kabul.

When the Taliban were in power, Murad said, some of its leaders grew so frustrated by the drought they randomly rounded up dozens of people, drove them into the desert and demanded they pray for rain. It didn't come.

"You can't force people to pray," Murad said. "They should have gone out in the desert themselves."

Murad said his father told him this is the most rain he has seen in more than 30 years. Another Afghan in Kandahar heard it was the most rain in nearly 100 years, though such claims are impossible to substantiate because of inadequate record-keeping.

As recently as October, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network predict-



AP

ed the drought would continue and that serious food and water shortages would result. The network receives funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

By his own recollection, Murad said it's been at least a decade since so much rain fell in so little a time.

Some Afghans, a somewhat superstitious lot, blame the drought on the Taliban, which seized power in September 1996. People soon grew unhappy with the hard-line religious government and, consequently, Allah was unhappy, Murad said.

The recent success of the presidential election has turned frowns into smiles, he added.

"In the last 10 years," Murad said, "there was very little or no rain, and that was because of the Taliban. Absolutely. Everybody connects [the drought] to the Taliban."

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## U.N. chief: 'More selective' offensive could prompt refugee return

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. military could ease its operations in Afghanistan's most troubled regions to help persuade followers of the former Taliban government to come back to their homeland, the head of the U.N. refugee agency said Saturday.

Security in areas near the Pakistani frontier has already "improved considerably" after offers from President Hamid Karzai and American commanders not to pursue former Taliban foot-soldiers, RUND Lubbers the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said.

"The big shots of the Taliban will of course stay out because they will be imprisoned immediately," Lubbers said. "But the more rank-and-file people, normal people, I think there will see more" willingness to return.

The American military still leads a force of 18,000 soldiers in Afghanistan, and is in the midst of a winter-long operation supposed to prevent insurgents from disrupting parliamentary elections for the spring.

Fugitives such as Taliban supreme leader Mullah Omar and al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden remain at large, and two U.S. troops have died in action so far this year.

Still, American troops are increasingly involved in restoring



AP

**Afghan children eat in a shaft of sunlight from a shell hole in the roof of the former Russian culture center, where over one hundred refugee families find shelter, in Kabul on Saturday.**

Afghanistan's own fractured security forces, and U.S. officials are pressing Karzai to develop a reconciliation program for penitent Taliban to return if they agree to live in peace.

Lt. Gen. David Barno, the top U.S. commander here, told The Associated Press last month that he could cut his forces here if the program takes off.

To encourage those and other refugees return to the lawless border regions, Lubbers suggested that the U.S. military's offensive operations could become "more selective."

Thousands of Taliban supporters fled, many with their entire families, to Pakistan, Iran and other countries when U.S. forces and Afghan anti-Taliban militias

drove them from power in late 2001 for harboring Osama bin Laden.

The exodus was just the latest during more than 20 years of fighting in Afghanistan dating back to a communist coup in 1978 and the Soviet invasion a year later.

In all, about three million refugees have returned to Afghan-

istan since 2001, but only a fraction of those from border provinces such as Zabul and Paktika — where the hardline militia remain active — have come back.

Lubbers said security near the border had improved also because of U.S. military operations and the closure last year of refugee camps which served as bases for militants.

He said another 400,000 refugees would likely return to Afghanistan this year.

However, others wish to stay in Pakistan or Iran because of the difficulty of reclaiming abandoned Afghan homes and land and the lack of jobs or basic services in areas viewed as unsafe by relief organizations.

Many returnees have ended up in booming cities such as Kabul, where nearly a million refugees have prompted a desperate shortage of accommodation.

With the U.N. providing only emergency help and no sign of long-planned government housing projects, the dozens of families living in the capital's war-damaged former Russian cultural center see little hope.

"When I was a farmer, I was carefree as a butterfly," said Dost Mohammed, a man of about 80 originally from Panjshir province, living in a tiny room made of scavenged cement blocks and plastic sacks.

"Now look what has become of us."

# Museum worries about war damage in Babylon

Historians concerned about destruction to ancient city now serving as base for U.S.

By SUE LEEMAN  
The Associated Press

LONDON — The British Museum says U.S.-led coalition forces in Babylon have crushed part of the ancient Iraqi city's 2,600-year-old brick paved streets with their tanks and used soil containing archaeological fragments to fill sand bags.

The museum is concerned that U.S.-led troops, including U.S. Marines and the Polish-led force who have occupied the ancient Mesopotamian capital, had inflicted widespread damage to the ancient center of civilization, according to a report released Saturday.

"This is tantamount to establishing a military camp around the Great Pyramid in Egypt or around Stonehenge in Britain," wrote the report's author, John Curtis, the curator of the museum's Near East department.

Images of dragons on the molded brick foundations of the famous Ishtar Gate were marred by cracks and gaps where someone had tried to remove them, the report said.

Trenches had been dug into ancient deposits and there were archaeological fragments scattered across the site, including broken bricks stamped by King Nebuchadnezzar, Curtis said.

Curtis, who was invited by the Iraqis to study the site, also found that large quantities of sand mixed with archaeological fragments have been taken from the site to fill military sandbags and metal mesh baskets.

Lt. Col. Artur Domanski, a Polish military spokesman in Iraq, said multinational forces are cooperating with Iraqi authorities in efforts to protect the site.

"We are still interested at aiding and supporting the Iraqi archaeological services," he said in a telephone interview. "I have



The ancient city of Babylon as viewed from the Palace of ousted Iraqi ruler Saddam Hussein, 50 miles south of Baghdad. The British Museum accused U.S.-led troops using the ancient Iraqi city of Babylon as a base, of causing widespread damage and contamination.

asked our archeologists to prepare a specific answer to the accusations, but I have to give them some time."

In an interview Saturday with APTN, Iraq Minister of Culture Mufeed al-Jazairi said coalition troops in Babylon had used "armored vehicles and helicopters that land and take off freely. In addition to that, the forces also set up other facilities and changes."

"I expect that the archaeological city of Babylon has sustained damage, but I don't know exactly the size of such damage," he added.

The remains of Babylon, one of the

world's most important archaeological sites, have been occupied since the early days of the invasion by U.S. Marines and, more recently, by the Polish-led contingent. Babylon is 50 miles south of Baghdad.

The city's main sites — the Ishtar Gate, the ruins of Babylon and the Nebuchadnezzar Palace — are in a separate area on the camp's perimeter, run by Iraqi officials as an archaeological park open to paying visitors.

The U.S. military says all earth moving has been halted and it is considering moving troops away to protect the ruins.

**"I expect that the archaeological city of Babylon has sustained damage, but I don't know exactly the size of such damage."**

Mufeed al-Jazairi  
Iraq's minister of culture

Lt. Col. Steven Boylan, a U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad, told the Guardian newspaper that all engineering works were discussed with the head of the Babylon museum.

"An archaeologist examined every construction inflicted by its impact on historical ruins," he was quoted as saying.

In the report, Curtis acknowledged that at first the U.S. presence had helped to protect the site from looters.

But subsequent work — including the decision to cover large areas of the site with gravel brought in from elsewhere to provide car parks and helpads — was damaging, he said.

Curtis added that he had found evidence of fuel leakage around fuel containers to the northwest of the site's Greek theater.

For more than 1,000 years, Babylon was one of the world's premier cities, where Nebuchadnezzar II built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

The city declined and fell into ruin after it was conquered by the Persians under Cyrus the Great around 538 B.C.

## Healing hands in Iraq



U.S. Army nurse Jennifer Campbell prepares an injured American soldier for transport at the 86th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad on Friday.

## Overseer surprised at Arab acceptance of U.S. broadcasting

By BARRY SCHWEID  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The chief overseer of U.S. government broadcasts to the Arab world said Friday there is stunning acceptance of their accuracy in an environment often hostile to the United States.

"Who would even imagine five years ago, in countries where they boycott American products, that they say of an American government broadcast, 'your news is accurate,'" Kenneth Tomlinson said.

Tomlinson is chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees Radio Sawa as it sends a mixture of pop music and news in Arabic to at least 18 million listeners from Morocco to Iraq.

"The reaction has been fantastic from listeners, and polls demonstrate the people accept our news as credible," Tomlinson said.

Among ongoing improvements, he said, about 25 new

FM stations have been added in the Middle East in the last four years and transmission is being strengthened.

Operating on a \$22 million budget, Sawa broadcasts have largely displaced the Voice of America as the U.S.-sponsored radio outlet in the Middle East.

A draft report assessing operations and prepared by the State Department's inspector general was sent last summer to the board but was not released to the public.

Subsequently, the acting inspector general, Cameron Hume, questioned the standards used in preparing the report and called in independent auditors, a U.S. official said Thursday.

After a review, Hume concluded the report should not be issued.

But what Tomlinson described as "suggestions or challenges" were submitted to the board last month.

"Everyone is always trying to improve the quality of what they do in journalism."

# Army transformation takes glamorous turn

## Reservist endures emotional journey to be crowned Fox's 'The Swan'

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY

Special to Stars and Stripes

Basic training might have been tough. Deployment was no picnic. But Capt. DeLisa Stiles met her most challenging physical and emotional tests on a hit TV show on the Fox network.

Tummy tuck, eye lift, brow lift, breast augmentation: Stiles endured those surgeries and more to become "The Swan," and winner of the Fox makeover show of the same name.

For the first few days after the surgeries, Stiles said, with her eyes swollen to slits and much of her body quite tender, "it was intense," she said. But the 32-year-old Army reservist and reality-show contestant gritted her soon-to-be Zoom-bleached teeth, and her military training kicked in.

"I said to myself, 'You chose this, and you've just got to suck it up,'" she said in an interview recently.

Stiles, the only contestant to receive divorce papers during the show, did indeed suck it up, and went on to win the beauty pageant that is the show's culmination, and, with it, some \$300,000 in cash and (mostly) prizes and a \$100,000 gig as Nutri-System diet company's new spokeswoman. Even if she hadn't won, she said, her willingness to open up her life and her perceived deficiencies to 8 million TV viewers would have been worthwhile.

"I think the TV show was actually helpful," she said. "It held up a mirror to me—Is this what you really want to see?"

Sixteen women were chosen for the show and the surgeries from more than 300,000 letters sent to producers. Eight plus a "wild card" from the dismissed women competed in the pageant. Celebrity judges picked Stiles as the Swan.

A psychologist in civilian life, Stiles would be facing a much different challenge if a medical problem hadn't sent her back from Kuwait to Fort Riley, Kansas. Assigned to the 468th Quartermaster Battalion in Dallas, Texas, she'd been "cross-leveled" into the 101st Quartermaster Company out of Independence, Kansas — with orders, along with 120 reservists she'd never met, to deploy to Iraq. Stiles made it to Kuwait in 2003 before a blood clot in her arm returned her state-side. "I have such mixed feelings," she said, about missing that tour of duty.

She was put on blood thinners in preparation to join her unit, but when she was cleared to go she was told that because the unit had less than 90 days remaining in Iraq, she wasn't going anywhere.

She saw the first season of "The Swan" while she recuperated at Fort Riley, and decided to try to get on the show's next season. "I mailed hideous pictures of me in my underwear, and they called me for a casting call," she said.

It wasn't just her looks that Stiles thought could use an upgrade. It was also the way she lived her life — apparently content, but full of self-doubt. She thought the show's producers and its viewers might respond to that, she said. She was right.

"The troubled marriage, the false bravado... they thought women could really relate to that," Stiles said. "Women try to be tough and we're filled with self-doubt and we don't want anyone to see that."

Born and raised in Texas, Stiles enlisted in junior ROTC when she was 17, although she didn't come from a military family.

"I felt like it was an important way for me to serve my country," she said. She spent months in Saudi Arabia during the first Iraq war, her quartermaster unit about 50 miles away from any intense fighting.



Courtesy of Fox

Amanda Byram, left, crowns Capt. DeLisa Stiles as "The Swan" on the second-season finale of Fox's reality television series on Dec. 20, 2004. After months of grueling surgeries and a divorce, Stiles left the pageant with \$300,000 in cash and prizes.

After Desert Storm, Stiles went to college, joined senior ROTC, and eventually got a master's degree in psychology and her commission. But, she told the show's producers, she felt that being in the military had taken a toll on her femininity.

"I just felt like I had this great assertive side, and [the military] taught me to be firm," she said. "But it didn't teach me to be more diplomatic, and to be sort of soft and yielding."

And while she said others viewed her as capable and even daring, she didn't feel that way about herself. "I always chose the safe path," she said.

In addition to the cosmetic surgery and dentistry, contestants on "The Swan" also must follow special diets, engage in rigorous workout programs and have counsel-

ing sessions with both a therapist and a "life coach," who happens to be the Los Angeles-based show's creator and executive producer.

They go through a four-month process of transformation during the show — without contact from their families save some brief phone calls — with their heartaches, frustrations and surgeries laid out for some 8 million viewers.



Photo courtesy DeLisa Stiles

Stiles before her makeover. Now physically transformed after multiple cosmetic surgeries, Stiles says, "I feel like I look the way I always should have looked."

As the show progressed, some of the women went home, surgically enhanced but out of the Miss America-style competition for cash and prizes. Stiles was crowned "The Swan" because she was the one judged to have been most changed and improved.

The show, which is coming up on its third season, has been criticized as tasteless or offensive for encouraging women to undergo painful surgeries to conform to a beauty ideal, and then to compete to see who's best.

But Stiles said none of the women had any regrets, as far as she knew, and neither did she. She maintains that her physical change was emotional, in that she became comfortable taking risks. And as for her new look? "I feel like I look the way I always should have looked," she said.

She did have concerns that some in the military might think that being on the show was inappropriate for a U.S. military officer, but so far, she said, she's only received good reviews. One e-mail, Stiles said, read "Way to go, Ma'am. Show them we've got really beautiful women in the Army."

Capt. Tyronne Hunt, a fellow member of the 468th Quartermaster Battalion, said that nearly everyone there had heard about Stiles' success on the show — although he said he hadn't watched it — and that most everyone found her quite fortunate and wished her well. Stiles' commander could not be reached for comment.

Stiles said she doesn't know if people in her unit will treat her differently now.

"My military record and the way I conduct myself is going to speak for itself," she said. "I won't be wearing false eyelashes. I won't be so glamorous."

Well, maybe, maybe not. Stiles has about seven years before retirement from the Reserves, and she said she's happy as a quartermaster. She said she didn't want the "Army can't do without them."

Still, what she'd really love to do is go on a USO tour, she said. Most women on USO tours, such as Ann-Margret, tend to glam it up.

Said Stiles, "I know what it's like to be deployed, to have these outrageous hardships and just have it be your life."

"I'd love to meet the commander in chief," she added. "Do you think it would be inappropriate to hug the president?"

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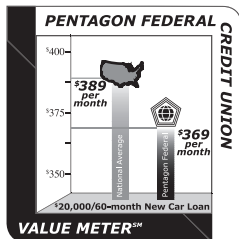


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# Missing Marine one of Navy's 'most wanted'

The Associated Press

WEST JORDAN, Utah — A Marine who was declared a deserter days before military court proceedings stemming from an earlier disappearance from Iraq has been placed on a list of "most wanted" fugitives.

A mug shot of Marine Cpl. Wassef Ali Hassoun appeared this week on a Navy criminal justice Web site, which claims the missing corporal now uses the alias "Jafar." His placement on the Navy list puts him among a select group of fugitives, some of whom are being hunted on allegations of terrorism, murder, conspiracy to commit murder, indecent assault and rape.

Military officials say they have no information about the 24-year-old man's whereabouts, and have been unable to confirm news reports that Hassoun was in Canada or Lebanon. Officials at his base at Camp Lejeune, N.C., did not immediately return a message



Hassoun

left after hours seeking comment.

Military officials say that Hassoun has no passport. And Mohamed Hassoun, a brother, confirmed reports from Lebanese government officials that the Marine is not allowed back in that country.

Hassoun's family has said they last heard from him Dec. 29.

When he failed to arrive at his base in Camp Lejeune, N.C., by Jan. 5, Hassoun was declared a deserter for a second time.

Hassoun was an Arabic translator for the military when he first disappeared from his post in Iraq last summer. He later surfaced in Lebanon where he claimed he had been kidnapped. Al-Jazeera Television showed video of Hassoun blindfolded.

A five-month investigation by the Navy found that Hassoun had stolen a Humvee and fled his camp near Fallujah. On Thursday, a pre-trial hearing on charges of desertion and theft was postponed because Hassoun remains missing.

Hassoun is a Muslim with citizenship in both the United States and Lebanon.

Family members in both Utah and Lebanon have called on the corporal to surrender.

## Military gets big inauguration role

By LISA HOFFMAN

Scraps Howard News Service

WASHINGTON — About a year ago, Army Sgt. Cameron Baker was in Tikrit, Iraq, setting up a secure communications link between U.S. commanders in Baghdad and the American troops who had just captured Saddam Hussein.

Today, Baker sits in another high-pressure spot, albeit one in more comfortable surroundings. As computer-network server chief, Baker is a key cog in a behind-the-scenes military operation dedicated to making the nation's 55th presidential inauguration a seamless event of proper pomp and efficiency.

Baker is one of more than a brigade's worth of active-duty, Reserve and National Guard troops who will march, make music, escort dignitaries and serve as a security bulwark for President Bush's second inauguration Thursday.

It won't all be work for the U.S. servicemen. During this relatively rare wartime inaugural,

they also will stand front-and-center in the spotlight of the festivities.

On Tuesday, a pre-inaugural gala dubbed "Saluting Those Who Serve" will honor the 170,000 U.S. troops now in Iraq and Afghanistan. Among the headlines will be singers John Michael Montgomery, Gloria Estefan

*Troops will stand front-and-center in the spotlight of the festivities.*

tefan and BeBe Winans, along with actor Kelsey Grammer, boxing promoter Don King and Miss USA Shandi Finnessey.

On Thursday, about 2,000 troops and their spouses will be feted at a first-ever Commander-in-Chief's Ball, the premier event on the inaugural night of black-tie party-going. But organizers say most of the GIs invited are rank-and-file troops either back from the combat front or

soon to deploy.

"This event has been added to the inaugural celebration to honor our troops and thank them for their service," Presidential Inaugural Committee executive director Greg Jenkins said.

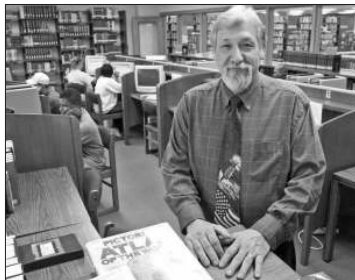
While that ball is a Bush innovation, the military's role in inaugurations reaches back to the first, when militia members accompanied George Washington on his trek from Mount Vernon to New York, and Continental Army soldiers escorted him to be sworn in. Their presence has been hailed from the start as a symbolic affirmation of two American bedrocks — civilian control of the army and the peaceful transition of power.

In a country blessed with few wars, most inaugurations have occurred during times of peace. Even when America has been engaged in overseas conflicts, most inaugural celebrations have gone on, although Woodrow Wilson canceled the inaugural ball during World War I, and Franklin D. Roosevelt mixed three due to the Depression and World War II.

Some Democrats and other critics have blasted Bush for proceeding with a \$40 million gala while U.S. soldiers are dying in Iraq, with calls rising in recent days from Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., and others to cancel the festivities and donate the money to the south Asian tsunami victims.

But Bush inaugural officials and supporters say the president says the event as an opportunity to pay tribute to the troops. Even so, they say the tone of the inauguration will be suitably solemn.

"I don't know how you would have made it lower-key and still have been able to express your appreciation," said Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., who heads Congress's inaugural committee.



John Vassallo, director of the Thomas Lee Hall Library, stands in the computer reference area on Jan. 5 at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C. The tiny library serves not only the 30,000 people associated with Fort Jackson, but also the 50,000 soldiers who annually come through this installation for weeks or months of training.

## Offering support goes by the book

### Military libraries serve warriors abroad, families back home

By SUSANNE M. SCHAFER

The Associated Press

FORT JACKSON, S.C. — A Marine in Iraq wants a database search for information about terrorist suspects. Children lonely for their moms and dads at war need a few good books to help pass the time. A sailor wants to study for the college entrance exam during his month at sea.

As the war on terror continues, America's military librarians serve readers who range from warriors in the field to the families they've left behind.

"Last year, we had 20,600 people sign up to use our services," said John Vassallo, director of the Thomas Lee Hall Library at Fort Jackson, the Army's largest training installation.

Vassallo's tiny library — the main branch on this huge base — serves not only the 30,000 people normally associated with Fort Jackson, but also the 50,000 soldiers a year who come through here for weeks or months of training.

The library has rows of revolving racks filled with paperback favorites for young Army recruits. Seats in the reading room are full on weekends, and sign-up lines form for the computers during the lunch hour and on weekends.

Open 46 hours a week, the library tries to meet the demands of its readers whether they are in the military or not.

"We have 10,000 children's books," Vassallo said as he pointed to the children's room, packed floor to ceiling with picture books and other offerings for soldiers' youngsters. The library also keeps up with a selection of best

sellers since military retirees make up its largest constituency.

It's just one example of a "general" library on a military post.

Army officials say there are 82 such Army libraries at installations worldwide. In all, there are about 230 libraries in the Army system, which includes academic, technical, legal, medical and military unit libraries.

Air Force officials say their service has 109 libraries worldwide; Navy officials said their branch has 32 general libraries on bases and book collections on some 322 active vessels.

The Navy and Marine Corps also have more than 50 specialized libraries, according to Carole Ramsey, head of the Grey Research Center at the Marine Corps University in Quantico, Va.

Ramsey has handled urgent queries from war fighters in the field, but her main customers are Marines attending the military schools at her installation.

"Most recently, there's been a lot of queries about potential terrorist groups," she said.

And keeping up with the military's wide-ranging demands for information can be daunting.

"They want it now, and they want it in electronic," as they say, Ramsey said. "They want to download texts."

Janice Lachance, executive director of the Special Libraries Association, praised military librarians as "an amazing resource" for the nation's military.

"Not only do they provide information and support to our military leaders, they are an integral part of our military operations because they are key to supporting the families back home," Lachance said.

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## IN THE STATES

## Army engineers help relieve dam pressure

2,300 evacuated from nearby Calif. town; Midwest recovering from rains

BY RYAN PEARSON  
The Associated Press

CORONA, Calif. — Thousands of residents who were evacuated from the path of a leaking dam were urged to stay away through Monday after authorities released a torrent of water to ease pressure on the barrier.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Friday unleashed more than 10,000 cubic feet of water per second to relieve pressure on the dam 50 miles southeast of Los Angeles.

"That's like a swimming pool every second," Corona Mayor Darrell Talbert said.

The water gushed into the Santa Ana River, whose banks were deep enough to handle the flow without flooding, said Lt. Col. John Guenther, deputy commander of the corps' Los Angeles district.

Police evacuated 2,300 people but called off the mandatory evacuation order late Friday afternoon. However, they advised residents not to return until Monday as a precaution.

The dam problems followed a series of

storms since last week that turned Southern California into one big flood zone. The torrential rain triggered a mudslide in the tiny town of La Conchita that killed 10 people and damaged several homes. In all, 28 people died in the state from the storms.

Residents of La Conchita were allowed to return to their homes Friday, but it will take two to four more weeks for water service to be restored and two to seven days for gas and electricity to be turned back on.

The storms that saturated California also drenched the Midwest, and rivers in parts of Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio still were above flood stage Saturday. The Ohio River had earlier flooded riverbank roads and homes in parts of West Virginia.

On Friday, the floodgates at Paduch, Ky., were closed along the Ohio for the first time since 1997.

Even though no more rain is expected for several days, Indiana's Wabash River is expected to hit its highest level since February 1985 this weekend and next week south of Lafayette, said meteorologist

Chad Omitt at the National Weather Service in Indianapolis.

Governors of Ohio and Indiana declared emergencies in flood areas earlier in the week, and on Friday Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels asked President Bush to declare at least 64 counties a major federal disaster area.

In Corona, nearly 1,000 homes in town and about 100 people from a recreational vehicle park in an adjoining area were evacuated, forming a slow caravan of cars that snaked through the neighborhoods.

At an evacuation center in the high school gymnasium, Corona officials defended their decision to evacuate.

Corona Police Chief Richard Gonzales said seepage at the base of the dam had increased fivefold after it was detected Thursday evening. The seepage came from a temporary earthen barrier protecting construction crews who were relocating outlet channels and raising the dam's height by 28 feet.

"I'm sorry if we woke you up, I'm sorry if we got you out of your home... I wasn't gonna lose any of you, period," he said to a round of applause.



Excess rainwater and a leak from the Prado Dam threaten to flood this neighborhood in Corona, Calif. More than 2,000 people were evacuated Friday from the floodpath.

## Fire at recycling plant has Ind. town watching, waiting

The Associated Press

ANDERSON, Ind. — A magnesium fire at a recycling plant that forced thousands to evacuate their homes may take days to burn itself out since fire-fighters have given up trying to extinguish the blaze themselves.

The fire erupted at the Advanced Magnesium Alloys Corp. plant around 5 p.m. Friday, but explosions forced firefighters out less than three hours later, said police Detective Terry Sollars.

No injuries were reported. At midmorning Saturday, several dozen fire and police officers remained posted around the plant, keeping watch on the fire that had grown considerably smaller overnight but continued to smolder, Sollars said.

Representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency were at the scene.

"They're taking tests of the air quality before they let anyone back in. We're not sure when that might happen," Sollars said.

Magnesium is a silvery-white, highly flammable metal. Burning magnesium produces irritating or toxic fumes and is typically extinguished using dry sand since water can cause a flare-up or explosion.

"God doesn't have enough sand in Anderson," Fire Chief J.R. Rosenkrantz said. By 9 p.m. Friday, he had decided to let the fire burn itself out.

Authorities evacuated 3,000 to 5,000 people from an area about one mile wide and two miles long that lay in the path of the smoke, which was carried by wind at about 5 mph, Sollars said.



A fire at the Advanced Magnesium Alloys Corp. plant, a magnesium recycling facility in Anderson, Ind., spews toxic fumes, forcing authorities to evacuate several thousand people from their homes Friday.

## Search resumes for five feared lost in avalanche

BY PAUL FOY  
The Associated Press

PARK CITY, Utah — Searchers returned to the site of a massive avalanche near a Utah ski resort on Saturday, hoping to find the bodies of five people feared dead under 30 feet of snow.

The rescue effort was halted before sunset Friday because of concerns over secondary slides, but avalanche charges were dropped from helicopters overnight to make the area safer.

Crews returned around 8 a.m. to search an area 500 yards wide outside the boundary of The Canyons resort on federal land in the Wasatch-Cache National Forest.

The exact number of people caught in the Friday afternoon slide was not yet known, but Summit County Sheriff's Capt. Alan Siddaway said officials knew of five unaccounted-for skiers and had descriptions of clothing and equipment for some of them.

Authorities changed the focus of the operation from rescue to recovery before suspending the search Friday.

"I think it's safe to say the odds

of surviving are very, very low," Summit County Sheriff Dave Edmunds said Friday night.

The area where the avalanche occurred was marked with a skull and crossbones to discourage thrill-seekers. Skier Jess Fleig, a 35-year-old disc jockey, said he frequents the backcountry but stayed away from that area Friday.

"What immediately came to mind is that's trouble waiting to happen," said Fleig, speaking on a cell phone from a mountaintop.

About 100 search and rescue workers, rescue dog crews and members of ski patrols from Summit County resorts searched the area for victims, Edmunds said. The enormity of the slide was underscored when rescuers, working on 30-degree slopes, found that their 20-foot probes weren't going deep enough into the snow.

Even before Friday, this had already been one of the deadliest winters for avalanches in Utah since records were first kept in 1951. Before Friday, six people had died in slides; no previous winter had seen more than six deaths.

## Bush says Social Security system headed for bankruptcy

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush said Saturday that Social Security "is on the road to bankruptcy" and will be unable to pay promised benefits to future generations, raising the stakes in a major political battle with Democrats.

Bush used his weekly radio address to try to build support for his plan to allow workers to divert part of their Social Security

payroll taxes into private investment accounts. Democrats accuse him of exaggerating the problem to sell a plan that would scale back Social Security.

Bush said the cost of fixing the system grows larger each year, and he quoted Social Security trustees as saying that waiting just one year would add \$600 billion to the price of a solution.

"If we do not act now, government will eventually be left with two choices: dramati-

cally reduce benefits or impose a massive economically ruinous tax increase," the president said. According to experts, in the year 2018 Social Security will start paying out more in benefits than it collects in payroll taxes. In 2042, it will be able to cover only about 73 percent of benefits owed, unless changes are made.

Democrats countered Bush's arguments in their address an hour later. Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan said her party is wait-

ing for a detailed proposal from Bush. But she said one White House memo suggests he wants to cut benefits for future workers by up to 45 percent.

"The benefit cuts would apply to all seniors — even those who choose not to invest in privatized accounts," Stabenow contended.

Social Security does face long-term challenges, she said, but private investment isn't the answer.

## Men join to put end to sex assault

Scraps Howard News Service

BOULDER, Colo. — Rex Manz was the only one who didn't have his hand up.

He was also the only man in the room full of volunteers for the nonprofit Moving to End Sexual Assault, but that didn't bother him as much before the question.

"Have you done anything to avoid being sexually assaulted today?" a trainer asked.

Next to him, his wife, Judy, raised her hand. Manz had no idea the mother of his two children lived with the fear of being raped on a daily basis.

He's working to change that, along with four other men, as part of the new Men's Prevention Education Program run by the Boulder nonprofit Moving to End Sexual Assault, or MESA.

The idea is for men to talk to other men, and boys, about their role in preventing sexual assault.

"It's men challenging other men on what they're doing, what they're saying and how they're acting," said Janine D'Annunzio, MESA's executive director.

It encompasses everything from stopping a buddy from taking advantage of a drunk woman to curbing vulgar talk in the locker room.

The number of programs to help survivors of sexual assault is at an all-time high, and education of women on how to stay safe is almost second nature nowadays, but what hasn't been affected is the number of assaults, Katz said.

## Grilling awaits Rice on road to confirmation

By JAMES BROSNAN

Scraps Howard News Service

WASHINGTON — National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, who in college feared she was destined to play show tunes in a piano bar, faces a demanding gig this week before climbing another rung up from the segregation of her childhood in Alabama.

On the eve of President Bush's inaugural Thursday, his nominee for secretary of state is expected to face tough questions at Senate confirmation hearings about her own credibility and administration policies in Iraq, where more than 1,300 American soldiers have died.

No one doubts Rice will be confirmed by the Senate, but the Foreign Relations Committee hearings Tuesday and possibly Wednesday will be a test of her ability to handle herself on a stage where she will appear frequently, as well as a chance for her to expound on Bush's foreign policy aims for his second term.

Democrats plan to challenge Rice in a way they never did with her predecessor, Colin Powell, who four years ago breezed through a 4½-hour hearing.

"I'm going to have a lot of questions," said Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., "I ranges all the way from how in the world she could have been persuaded that going into Iraq was a good idea to some very specific things on the information the president used."

The committee is loaded with liberal Democrats, including Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., Bush's foe in the 2004 election.

Republicans are confident she's up for the confrontation. Senate Foreign Relations Com-

mittee Chairman Dick Lugar, R-Ind., said, "I don't think they will be contentious. We've indicated to all members they should have a full opportunity to ask all the questions."

As was the case with Bush's nominee for attorney general, Alberto Gonzales, Rice, 50, is likely to be acknowledged by senators from both parties as someone who achieved great heights in the face of discrimination.

"I grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, before the civil rights movement — a place that was once described, with no exaggeration, as the most thoroughly segregated city in the country," Rice recalled at Vanderbilt University last year.

Rice had one advantage. Her parents, John and Angelina Rice, now deceased, were college graduates at a time when few Southern blacks got beyond high school. Her father, a Presbyterian pastor, became an alumnus of Stillman College and her mother taught music and science at an all-black school.

Rice claims she could read music before she could read words, but in studying music at the University of Denver she was "confronted with the incontrovertible fact that I was good, but not great."

A course in international relations from Czech refugee Josef Korbel, father of the first woman secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, put Rice on a new path. Graduate degrees in international relations followed from the University of Notre Dame and the University of Denver.

Rice served on President Bush's national security staff as a specialist on the Soviet Union and



National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice walks to the West Wing at the White House in 2003. Rice, President Bush's nominee for secretary of state, faces confirmation hearings in the Senate this week.

was provost at Stanford University when his son tapped her to become his foreign policy adviser in the 2000 campaign.

In the White House, she often found referring between the cautious Powell and the aggressive Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

The hearings are important, according to Leon Fuerth, who was national security adviser to former Vice President Al Gore.

"How she handles herself under questioning becomes part of the first impression everyone gets of her as secretary of state," he said.

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## Settlement pits Little Tobacco against industry giants

By STEPHANIE STOUGHTON

The Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — Little Tobacco is preparing to fight Big Tobacco in Virginia and other states considering legislation that could sap the small manufacturers' sales.

The dispute emerged from a landmark national settlement that required Philip Morris USA and other industry giants to pay \$206 billion to settle lawsuits by the states over health care costs.

Major tobacco companies and the National Association of Attorneys General say a loophole gives an unfair price advantage to small manufacturers operating outside the 1998 agreement. But the smaller companies counter that the states are unfairly seeking to punish them for the larger companies' past behavior — and perhaps snuff them out for good.

In recent years, Little Tobacco's squeaks of protests barely registered as statehouse after

statehouse passed legislation to close the loophole — an amendment that has forced many small cigarette makers to bump up their prices.

The basics of the Master Settlement Agreement required industry giants Philip Morris, R.J. Reynolds, Brown & Williamson (which has since merged with RJR to form Reynolds American Inc.) and Lorillard Tobacco Co. to make large payments to the states. The companies passed on the costs to smokers by raising cigarette prices.

Lesser known are the settlement's complex rules. Philip Morris and the other companies, for instance, make payments that are allocated to the states based on a formula.

To keep smaller manufacturers from getting a price advantage, the states passed statutes requiring that they deposit money into escrow — currently about \$3.90 per carton — in each state where they did business. The money would be returned in 25 years, provid-

ing there were no liabilities from tobacco-related claims.

But the statutes also allowed the little guys to quickly recover a portion of their escrowed money if the amount they paid to a particular state exceeded what they would have paid had they joined the settlement.

That meant that companies that concentrated their sales in states like Wyoming and Idaho — which receive tiny shares of MSA payments — could recoup much of their escrow funds and then outprice the major tobacco firms.

Alarmed by the trend, the attorneys general association in the fall of 2003 warned the states to expect a large decline in settlement payments.

It also urged the states to target nonparticipating manufacturers' sales by adopting several measures, including the amendment that closed the so-called loophole in the escrow statute.

So far, the amendment has passed in 37 states.

# Bush seized moment and hasn't let go

BY CONNIE CASS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Tumultuous times seem to fit George W. Bush.

His presidency was off to a lackluster start in its first, quiet months before Sept. 11, 2001. After the terrorists struck, Bush told the nation, "We have found our mission and our moment."

His presidency also found its purpose. He seized the moment. He grew in stature and confidence, rising above the gibes about his intellect and a disputed election, and for a while became a living symbol of American resolve. He hasn't looked back.

Bush's responses to the attacks — declaring war against terror at home, in Afghanistan and in Iraq — have made him a galvanizing and towering figure, not only in the United States but in the world. Few modern leaders have so shaped history by dint of their own will.

Now Bush, 58, begins a hard-won second term ready to focus more of that will on reshaping America. He is determined to "transform" — one of his favorite words — Social Security, the income tax code, the civil justice system and more.

Let history settle whether Bush was indeed the right man for the times, whether he acted with necessary boldness or brashly overreached. Either way, the furies have been surprisingly quiet for Bush the man.

"Crisis is suited to his personality," said Erwin C. Hargrove, Vanderbilt University professor of political science. "He likes to rise to the challenge."

Bush has made hay of low expectations ever since the days when then-Gov. Ann Richards of Texas dismissed her upstart challenger as a "shrub."

Former President Clinton calls Bush's habit of allowing himself to



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE/AP

President Bush shakes hands with Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class George Accafale, during a visit to the Pentagon on Thursday. From left are Air Force Staff Sgt. Kevin O'Grady, of North Brunswick, N.J.; Marine Staff Sgt. Tyege Hickman, of Piqua, Ohio; Accafale; Army Sgt. Tyesha Panda, of Cairo, Ill.; and Air Force Tech. Sgt. Darrell Archard, of Glens Falls, N.Y.

be underestimated "this little sh\*t." As family friend Doug West puts it, "If they think you're dumb, good!"

In contrast to Clinton, Bush doesn't read long memos, display a thirst for detail or stay up late debating the subtleties of policy. He's more like Reagan, laying out steadfast principles and big goals and letting others work out the details.

"He doesn't talk things to death," said former aide and longtime friend Joe Albaugh. Another friend and aide, Clay Johnson, said, "He's not a fretter."

Detractors see a glib arrogance unmatched by intellect or accomplishments. All hat, no cattle, in Texas terms.

Bush says what looks like swagger is simply the natural product

of his West Texas boyhood. In contrast with his father's blue-blooded presidential style, the son will never be plagued by "the wimp factor."

"George Bush has by temperament and by strategy decided to be a much more aggressive president," Hargrove said.

Polls say half the public disapproves of his presidency, yet Bush plans "big things" for his final term.

And why not? In a first term won by the narrowest of margins, he snubbed the United Nations and European allies with his war in Iraq, muscled through Congress a bill that expanded the federal government's role in education, and won three major tax cuts.

He's grayer, a bit more wrinkled, a few pounds heavier, but the

office hasn't aged Bush as it does some. Friends say he's changed remarkably little.

Known for his discipline, Bush is likely to keep his daily routine for four more years: reading about 60 pages of daily briefing material before turning in early, up around 5:30 a.m. to study the Bible, heading into the Oval Office in suit and tie around 7 a.m., daily exercise to stay fit.

Even him to start meetings on time, or even early, offer sharp looks and tart words to any staffer foolish enough to arrive unprepared; lighten the tension with wit.

Friends say Bush relishes the job.

"Even in times that have been extremely difficult," said Texas buddy Charlie Younger, "he wakes up every morning happy that he's the president of the United States."

## First lady may get more of 2nd-term spotlight

BY DARLENE SUPERVILLE

The Associated Press



First lady Laura Bush arrives on stage for a Presidential Inaugural Ball at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington in 2001. She may play a larger role in her husband's second term.

WASHINGTON — Look for first lady Laura Bush to get around more in a second term.

After four years of focus on early childhood education — reading to youngsters, visiting schools and recruiting new teachers — she's now talking about working with substance-abusing juvenile delinquents as well.

There'll be the customary travel to Europe and other stops on her husband's itinerary, but she longs to set foot in places off the beaten path, such as Afghanistan — she is an advocate for women's rights there — and Iraq, where her husband went in 2003.

Those efforts could help make up for a first term that was overshadowed by outside events and defined at the outset by her political inexperience.

Mrs. Bush was on Capitol Hill to make her debut before Congress testifying about early childhood learning when terrorists struck on Sept. 11, 2001. In February 2003, she canceled a literary symposium after learning some poets planned to use the White House event to protest the coming war in Iraq.

In last year's campaign, President Bush often told audiences he should be re-elected "so Laura Bush will be the first lady for four more years."

Wish granted, Mrs. Bush can be expected to step out more in the second term, especially as the president tackles some contentious domestic issues, said historian Robert Watson.

"She's a reassuring presence next to him," said Watson, a specialist on first ladies who teaches at Florida Atlantic University. "She reinforces that image that he's trying to project."

Though politics may have required it, she campaigned extensively on her own and was a popular draw, even more than her husband.

In speeches around the country, Mrs. Bush defended the president from criticism over his education law, response to the terrorist attacks and pursuit of war in Iraq. She even stepped into the thorny debate over federal funding for embryonic stem-cell research.

Her address at the Republican convention marked a rare foray into foreign and domestic policy by a first lady. More than half the speech dealt with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Although Laura Bush is no Hillary Rodham Clinton, she's not afraid to let it be known when she disagrees with her husband. Days before he took office in 2001, Mrs. Bush said she didn't think the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision should be undone, despite her husband's opposition to most abortions.

Recently, she dropped hints that she may disagree with her husband's opposition to gay marriage.

"She seems to be remarkably comfortable in her own skin," Watson said. "What you see is kind of what you get, and I think people find that refreshing and comforting."

## How well do you know the president?

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A president, a husband, a father and a sports fan — those are the basic facts most Americans could tell you about George W. Bush. How much more does the country know about his chief executive? Here's a quiz to find out:

1. What is Bush's nickname?
2. What does the W. stand for?
3. What has Bush banned from the Oval Office?
4. What three states has Bush never visited during his time as president?
5. What state has Bush visited the most? Second most?
6. The president has hosted just four state dinners at the White House. What world leaders received this rare tribute?
7. What was Bush's favorite movie of 2004? Top flick in 2000?
8. Where did George and Laura Bush meet?
9. Seated in the family quarters to watch a game on television, what sport does the president prefer?
10. What does the president consider one of his hidden talents?

### ANSWERS:

1. Bush's nickname is Bushie — the same nickname he has given his wife.
2. The W. stands for Walker.
3. The president has banned jeans in the Oval Office, but he often wears cowboy boots with his suits when meeting with foreign leaders.
4. Idaho, Vermont and Rhode Island.
5. Bush has visited Pennsylvania 44 times — all before he took the state on Nov. 2. The president has visited Florida 33 times, the state that decided the presidency in 2000.
6. Earning a state dinner have been the leaders of Mexico, Poland, the Philippines and Kenya. Bush's top pick was "Saving Private Ryan," Steven Spielberg's World War II epic.
7. His favorite movie was "Friday Night Lights," a look at Texas high school football. In 2000, Bush's top pick was "Saving Private Ryan," Steven Spielberg's World War II epic.
8. They met at a back-yard barbecue at the home of mutual friends in Midland, went on a date the next night and were married three months later.
9. Baseball, says the former owner of the Texas Rangers.
10. Bush considers his knowledge of baseball trivia a hidden talent.



# Study: Drowsy docs as dangerous as drunks

## Marathon hours on extended shifts make medical interns a risk on the road

BY LINDA A. JOHNSON  
The Associated Press

They're in training to save lives, but medical interns sometimes threaten them: Lack of sleep from very long hospital shifts can make young doctors behind the wheel as dangerous as drunks, researchers found.

Doctors in training were more than twice as likely to get in a car crash while driving home after working 24 hours or longer, compared with when they worked shorter shifts, according to a study by Harvard Medical School researchers.

**"If they're going to require these trainees to work such long hours, they should at least provide them with transportation home."**

Dr. Charles A. Zeisler  
Harvard Medical School

The study also found that after extended shifts, young doctors were about six times more likely to report a near-miss accident and that they sometimes fell asleep while driving.

"A lot of the law public doesn't

realize that twice a week most young doctors in this country are forced by hospitals to work these marathon shifts of 30 hours in a row," said senior researcher Dr. Charles A. Zeisler, professor of sleep medicine at Harvard Medical School and head of sleep medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

"If they're going to require these trainees to work such long hours, they should at least provide them with transportation home,"

The study, reported in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine, was done by some of the same Harvard Medical

School researchers who just last fall reported that sleep-deprived doctors made one-third more medical errors during their many long shifts, compared with shorter ones.

### More on nation's stories on Page 18

The new study included monthly surveys the researchers collected from 2,737 first-year interns in hospitals around the country from April 2002 through May 2003. More than two-thirds of the drowsy doctors drove home from work.

The data, including police accident reports, showed that each extended work shift per month increased chances of a car crash by 16 percent while commuting home and raised the risk of any crash by 9 percent.

The researchers found the doctors worked on-call shifts averaging 32 hours in which they were lucky to grab a few hours' sleep, and about half worked from 81 to 140 hours per week.

An accompanying editorial by traffic safety consultant C. Dennis Wylie of Santa Clara, Calif., noted the increased accident risk for interns after an extended work shift strongly corresponds to the impairment of a driver with a blood alcohol level of 0.06 to 0.09 percent. The legal limit is 0.08 for drivers in most states.

In July 2003, just after this

### Driving risks increase after long shifts

Medical interns more than doubled the odds of a road accident when working shifts lasting 24 hours or longer. After extended shifts the interns were about six times more likely to report accidents.

Crash rates or near-misses after ...	... 32-hour average shift	... 12.7-hour average shift
Crashes per 10,000 commutes	10.7	4.0
Near-misses per 1,000 commutes	36.42	6.41

SOURCE: New England Journal of Medicine

AP

study concluded, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education set standards limiting interns' duty hours.

They now are limited to 80 hours per week and no more than three on-call shifts a week, both averaged over four weeks. Interns can work up to 24 straight hours, plus up to six additional hours for educational activities, and must get one day off per week on average.

"Residents are doing more work in less time with less help," said Dr. David Leach, the council's executive director. "We are absolutely convinced we moved in the right direction, and the

study validates that, but we still don't think we've got it absolutely right."

Zeisler said there's been some improvement, but the biggest danger — marathon shifts — hasn't been addressed.

"This is a group of individuals that are dedicating their lives to public health, and unfortunately, as a result of the schedules they're forced to keep, they become a public health threat when they hit the road," said Darrel Brodwin, spokesman for the National Sleep Foundation. "The policy of long schedules needs to be reconsidered."

# More high schools use Breathalyzers as deterrent

BY MAYA SURYARAMAN  
Knight Ridder Newspapers

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Thought Breathalyzers were just for cops? Guess again.

Increasingly, high schools across the country are deploying the devices at school dances, at other campus events.

With drinking widespread among U.S. teens, breath tests for alcohol are just one of many tools educators are employing to fight back. And because the machines used to test alcohol levels are now extremely affordable — they're available on the Internet for as little as \$50 — their use on high school campuses is spreading.

"The technology just gets cheaper and cheaper," said Michael Barnes, a trustee of the San Francisco Bay area's Albany Unified School District, which three years ago introduced the devices, often called Breathalyzers — at Albany High School. "It's always tempting to substitute technological monitoring for human monitoring."

Statistics on the total number of campuses using the breath-testing machines are hard to come by. But just one vendor, St. Louis-based Intoximeters, Inc., reports sales of 2,000 units to high school campuses nationwide.

School officials say they've turned to breath tests to curb preventable alcohol-related problems at campus events, from students vomiting or passing out, to teens becoming contentious when con-

## 'Recovery room' an option for substance abuse

BY THOMAS J. SHEERAN  
The Associated Press

CLEVELAND, Ohio — The dormitory at Case Western Reserve University looks like a fraternity house with its bare-bones furniture and sparse landscaping. All it's missing is the beer keg on the back porch.

It's a "recovery dorm" — university housing for students who are recovering from substance abuse problems and want to avoid the temptation of drinking and drugs rampant on many U.S. college campuses.

Many campuses have housing for nonsmokers and nondrinkers, but student residences for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts are rare.

Officials at Rutgers University in New Jersey, which pioneered the idea, know of only a handful of such recovery dorms, perhaps three or four nationwide.

Ben, a 19-year-old at Case who gave his first name only in the style of the recovery program Alcoholics Anonymous, knows how to party. He

learned to drink in the fifth grade in Cleveland. By high school, he was drinking at least three nights a week, sometimes having 20 drinks of beer, gin and tequila.

"Every time I had time, I would drink," said Ben, gently petting the mutt that he and his housemates have adopted. Now in college, Ben is trying to stay away from booze.

There are an estimated 1,400 alcohol-related deaths each year among college students in the United States, most involving car accidents. A government study released in 2003 said binge drinking — defined as having five or more drinks in a sitting — was climbing fastest among 18- to 20-year-olds in the United States.

Case Western's Recovery House opened in September on a quiet street between campus and Cleveland's Little Italy neighborhood. Like any campus, the 9,000-student Case gets its share of binge drinkers. About three dozen students a year require emergency room treatment for substance abuse, often alcohol, according to Jess Sellers, director of the school's counseling center.

fronted with their drunken behavior.

"Students would show up drunk at the dance," said Nikolai Kaestner, student activities director at Palo Alto, Calif.'s Gunn High School. "It would take an hour before the kid would admit to it. Now we don't discuss it with them. We just Breathalyze them immediately."

Gunn began using the devices at dances last school year. To bypass potential legal challenges and community concerns about students' civil rights, Gunn — like

most area campuses — tests students only if there's reason to suspect they've been drinking. The penalty for a positive result is a five-day suspension, which is reduced to three days if the student agrees to attend counseling provided by the school.

Anna Tong, a senior at Gunn, is not convinced her school's approach is effective.

"They just Breathalyze you if you're acting disorderly," Tong said. "People still manage to bring alcohol into dances."

Critics also argue that the tests

might encourage students to turn to other drugs that aren't monitored and that it does nothing to prevent student drinking off-campus, such as at dance after-parties.

But Kaestner said testing has made a difference at Gunn.

"We've had dances in the past where eight or 10 kids were suspended," Kaestner said. "Now we may have one kid."

Unlike at Gunn, Piedmont High School in the eastern San Francisco Bay area tests every student who walks through the door at a school dance.

"We felt it would be more of a deterrent if all kids were tested," said Pam Bradford, principal at Piedmont.

Bradford said it takes six to eight teachers a good hour to test all the students entering a dance, but that it has changed the character of the events.

For the last five years, Wilcox High School in Santa Clara, Calif., has used the machines on a suspicion-only basis at school dances, as well as at such events as senior picnics and grad nights — and even during the school day.

"Most of the time if we get a positive, it's here at school during the day," said Craig Williams, a vice-principal at Wilcox.

Most schools just use the devices for their own disciplinary purposes.

The courts don't consider the breath-testing devices used by area campuses as accurate enough to be introduced as evidence in court, said Capt. John Hironaka of the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office.

But this is not a problem for educators, who are generally looking for signs of any alcohol use, rather than to establish a specific level.

Teen drinking is down from the 1970s, but educators and public health experts are concerned that it's still widespread. The federally sponsored Monitoring the Future Survey for 2003 found that nearly 10 percent of high school seniors admitted drinking in the month before they were surveyed.



## IN THE WORLD



U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, second from right, arrives Saturday in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Wolfowitz said Washington was eager to hand off the control of operations to the affected nations.

# Wolfowitz: Troops to leave S. Asia as soon as feasible

## Official hopes tsunami missions end 'long before March'

BY JIM GOMEZ  
The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — The United States is eager to end its military tsunami relief operation as soon as Indonesia and other stricken nations are ready to take over, U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said Saturday.

The U.S. military wants "to try as quickly as we can to hand over responsibility to others and especially to the Indonesian government as they're ready to take that on," Wolfowitz said after taking a helicopter tour of Aceh province's ravaged coast and meeting with the country's military chief, Gen. Endriatono Sutarto.

A huge earthquake and the tsunami it spawned killed more than 157,000 people across 11 countries, triggering an unprecedented global response. The United States was quick to deploy thousands of troops to help in the relief effort, and American helicopter pilots have made hundreds of flights to deliver aid to Sumatra's coastal communities.

Still, Indonesia has expressed unease with the number of foreign troops on its territory as part of the relief effort and wants them out before the end of March.

Wolfowitz said the U.S. military role would wind down by that deadline.

"I would hope that we would not be needed [in the region] as a military long before March," he said during the flight to Asia, according to a transcript of his remarks released to the Pentagon.

A one-time ambassador to Indonesia, Wolfowitz said cooperation with Jakarta has been very good. When asked if it's possible the tsunami disaster will help bring reconciliation between the military and rebels in Aceh, he said that if the reconstruction is a success, people in Aceh will "see the benefit of being part of Indonesia."

The rebels, who want an independent homeland, have declared a cease-fire, and the government has said it is pursuing a permanent truce. But there has been no word on actual peace talks.

In Aceh, thousands of tsunami survivors were being paid by the U.N. Development Program 30,000 rupiah (\$3.27) a day to clear rubble and debris.

The U.N. refugee organization, the UNHCR, was distributing 10,000 five-person tents to survivors in Banda Aceh, the provincial capital, said spokesman Mats Nyberg, with another 10,000 tents expected to arrive soon.

Efforts to keep epidemics at bay intensified, with the United Nations speeding up its measles vaccination drive after 20 cases of the disease were reported across Aceh.

quiet spot to pray for a lost friend.

Mohamed Saleh, a teacher from Jakarta, stood outside the city's Grand Mosque and prayed, his hands raised and his eyes filled with tears.

"I have lost a friend in the tsunami, and I pray for him and the souls of all those that have perished," said Saleh, 50. "I pray that God will mend broken hearts and give them courage to overcome the grief."

Inside the mosque, pilgrims circled the kaaba, a cubic stone structure toward which Muslims turn for prayers five times a day.

Pilgrims circle the kaaba to start and finish hajj rituals, which can be stretched over days but peak with prayers on Mount Arafat, where Islam's founding Prophet Muhammad delivered his final sermon.

Two million Muslims perform the pilgrimage each year, a once-in-a-lifetime duty of all able-bodied Muslims who can afford it.

# Abbas sworn in as crises mount

BY MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH  
The Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Mahmoud Abbas was sworn in as Palestinian Authority president on Saturday and started his job with two crises: Israel cut contacts with him until he reins in militants and 46 election officials resigned amid allegations of irregularities in the vote that brought Abbas to power.

In the Gaza Strip, seven Palestinians were killed by Israeli army fire in two separate incidents Saturday, two days after Palestinian militants killed six Israeli civilians at a Gaza cargo crossing. The renewed violence dampened expectations — that had been fanned by the election victory of the moderate Abbas — that the two sides could break out of their deadlock after more than four years of fighting.

In his inaugural speech in Ramallah, Abbas said he extends his hand in peace to Israel, called for a cease-fire and said he was committed to the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan.

However, he made no direct mention of how he would deal with the militants — the most pressing item on his agenda. Abbas only said he would enforce the rule of law and "deepen the dialogue" with various Palestinian factions, an apparent reference to his attempt to negotiate a cease-fire with militants.

Abbas did not refer to Israel's decision to suspend contacts until he takes action against the armed groups. Israel announced the boycott Friday, in response to the attack on the Gaza crossing, with one Israeli official saying the gunmen had apparently set out from a Palestinian Authority base.

Israeli officials welcomed Abbas' call to end violence, but said he must translate that into action.

Abbas struck a largely conciliatory tone Saturday, saying Israel-

## 46 election officials quit

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Forty-six members of the Palestinian election commission, including top managers, resigned Saturday, saying they were pressured by Mahmoud Abbas' campaign and intelligence officials to abruptly change voting procedures during the Jan. 9 presidential poll.

Two senior members of the commission, Ammar Dwaik and Baha al-Bakri, resigned early Saturday, and officials later said 44 more members resigned. Six top election officials were among those who resigned.

The resignations raised questions about the election that gave Abbas an overwhelming victory with 62.3 percent, though the officials who quit said the alleged irregularities did not fundamentally affect the final vote tally.

"This proves that what happened is very serious and it must not happen again," said Dwaik, the commission's deputy chairman.

"These pressures and threats lessened the degree of the integrity of the election, even though overall it was free and fair."

— The Associated Press

lis and Palestinians are "destined to live side by side and to share this land." He condemned all violence, including the Gaza attack.

He called on Israel to halt military operations, including targeted killings of wanted Palestinians. "We are seeking a mutual cease-fire to end this cycle of violence," he said.

# Pilgrims converge in Mecca, praying for tsunami victims

BY ADNAN MALIK  
The Associated Press

MECCA, Saudi Arabia — Pilgrims streaming into Islam's holy city for the annual hajj prayed for the 157,000 people killed in last month's tsunami that devastated South Asia, asking God to give survivors the courage to cope.

The tragedy weighed heavily as the spiritual journey geared up.

Indonesia — the world's most populous Muslim nation with 220 million people — was hit hardest by the natural disaster, but 200,000 Indonesians, the country's quota, still were expected in Mecca.

One Indonesian man spoke of his surprise over the dozens of strangers who noticed his nationality printed on the pouch around his neck and approached to offer condolences for the more than 100,000 Indonesians who died Dec. 26. Another Indonesian found a



Many go repeatedly; it is believed to cleanse the soul and wipe away sin. By Friday, traffic into Mecca was bumper to bumper.

Security was high throughout Mecca, where Saudi officials try to prevent stampedes or other accidents, as well as watch

for possible terror attacks. At checkpoints several miles outside the holy city, officers stopped cars randomly, pestered in trunks, shining mirrors to look for explosives in undercarriages and checking IDs.

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims perform Friday prayers at the great mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, on Friday. Many pilgrims who streamed into Islam's holy city for the annual hajj asked God to give tsunami survivors the courage to cope.

# Images reveal orange surface on Saturn moon

BY MELISSA EDDY  
The Associated Press

DARMSTADT, Germany — New, refined pictures from Saturn's moon Titan released Saturday show a pale orange surface covered by a thin haze of methane and what appears to be a methane sea complete with islands and a mist-shrouded coastline.

Space officials worked through the night to sharpen the new photos taken by the space probe Huygens, which snapped the images Friday as it plunged through Titan's atmosphere before landing by parachute on the surface.

Many scientists at the European Space Agency center in Darmstadt, Germany, looked tired from their overnight work but were still clearly elated about the successful arrival of data from Huygens the day before — a major triumph for the European space program.

"The instruments performed brilliantly," said John Zarnecki, in

charge of the surface instruments. "We can't find a single missing data frame. The link and the quality of the data was absolutely superb."

Officials played back sound gathered from Huygens' microphone at the surface — a whooshing noise they did not identify. But the center of attention was the pictures.

One shot taken from an altitude of 10 miles showed dark lines that suggested stream beds carved by liquid flowing into a dark area suspected to be a sea of liquid methane — with light areas in the dark that could be islands.

"It is almost impossible to resist speculating that the flat dark material is some kind of drainage channel, that we are seeing some kind of a shoreline," said scientist Marty Tomasko from the University of Arizona, head of the camera team. "We still don't know if it has liquid in it."

Titan's notorious haze — which has kept astronomers from get-



ESA/NASA UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA/AP  
This image was returned by the ESA's Huygens probe during its descent to land on Titan.

ting a better picture through telescopes — is obvious in the two refined images shown Saturday.

An image taken on the surface shows chunks of what scientists say looks like water ice scattered over an orange surface overcast by methane haze. On Friday, the chunks were described as boulder-sized, but overnight examination showed they are much smaller and simply look big because they are close to Huygens' camera.

# EU set to expend \$1B on translation

BY RAF CASERT  
The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Translation costs at the European Union are set to pass a billion dollars a year as the economic bloc struggles to accommodate 10 new members after its expansion into Eastern Europe and the Baltics, officials said.

Critics chafe at the sum, but to many it's money well spent in keeping Europe's quilt of cultures — and national egos — intact.

The 10 new members that joined in May expanded the EU to 25 and added nine new languages for a total of 20. Once the many cross-translation services this requires are at full speed, the overall costs will rise to \$1.06 billion per year, from about \$720 million now, according to European Commission documents published Friday.

Interpretation costs may reach \$132 million in 2007, up from \$137 million last year.

Together, funding this unique system will take almost \$2.62 out of the pocket of every EU citizen every year. Many EU citizens have balked at the cost and called for a drastic reduction in the number of languages used officially.

The United Nations, with far more member nations, uses only six official languages, critics note. But Europe's Tower of Babel is essential, said Ian Andersen, a department head at the Directorate General for Interpretation.

"There is no way around it if you want to work in a community of law," he told reporters. When EU laws are binding on its citizens, they should be able to consult them in their own language.

"It is the democratic right of everyone who participates in decision-making to make their point and to have access to information on an equal footing," said Andersen, a Dane.

Language rights run even deeper than that, say the defenders of maximal translation: Take Swedish away from the Swedes, or Portuguese from the Portuguese, or Maltese from the residents of the Mediterranean island, and you have taken something essential.

It gets more complicated yet. Many in Spain are lobbying for the regional tongues of Catalan, Basque and Galician to get official EU status too. Some seek the same for Ireland's Gaelic. Further planned expansions of the bloc could bring in Romanian, Bulgarian, Turkish and Croatian.

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## Whoa 'Nellie'

**NE** LINCOLN — Sen. Ben Nelson finally has succeeded in getting President Bush to stop calling him by the detested nickname "Nellie."

Bush had been referring to the Nebraska Democrat as "Nellie" since 2001. Nelson disliked the nickname and had asked the president to stop using it.

The president likes to give people nicknames. He has called Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia, "Pootie-Poot," while aide Karen Hughes gets "High Prophet."

But Bush heeded Nelson's request to scrap his moniker, and at the recent White House Christmas party, the president referred to Nelson as "Benny."

"The president had a twinkle in his eye when he called me that," Nelson said.

## Anti-theft handcuffs

**AZ** PHOENIX — Some Phoenix-area inmates are in the pink — pink handcuffs.

Maricopa County sheriff's deputies began using fluorescent pink handcuffs Thursday to transport inmates.

Sheriff Joe Arpaio said he introduced the pink handcuffs because he was tired of losing them to his own deputies and other law enforcement agencies. He ordered 100 of the pink handcuffs, which he used in England, at \$19.44 each. The regular ones cost \$18.84 a pop.

"We presume nobody else has pink handcuffs, so we can spot them and know they're ours," he said. Patrol deputies will still carry the silver cuffs, which they pay for themselves.

## Low-scoring affair

**VT** MILTON — It's hard to imagine that a three-point-er in the second quarter of a high school boy's basketball game would turn out to be the winning basket — unless it's one of only three made in the entire game.

That basket, along with an earlier field goal, all by Bellows Free Academy-Fairfax needed to beat Milton on Wednesday night. The final score: 5-2.

"I've never had a player hit a game-winner in the second quarter before," BFA-Fairfax coach Glen Button Jr. said.

Neither team scored in the second half.

Smith said the slowdown was implemented because BFA (7-4) has a strong scoring presence, while Milton (2-8) does not. The Milton players believed their best chance to be competitive was to just hold onto the ball.

## Man busted with ricin

**FL** OCALA — A man was arrested after authorities allegedly found the deadly toxin ricin stashed in a cardboard box at his home along with a small cache of weapons, officials said Thursday.

Steven Michael Ekberg, 22, faces up to 10 years if convicted of possession of a biological agent. FBI agents said they didn't believe Ekberg, arrested Wednesday, had any connection with terrorist groups.

There was no explanation for how or why he obtained the ricin.

The sheriff's office was tipped

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

off last week by an informant who alleged Ekberg had been carrying concealed weapons into clubs — and boasted of having ricin in one of several vials and glass tubes he allegedly showed off.

## Top of the list

**MA** BOSTON — If you're on the A-list at Suffolk Superior Court this month, then most likely you're also in the jury pool.

A computer glitch at the state Office of Jury Commissioner alphabetized names of potential jurors, rather than shuffling them, before summonses were sent out. That created a jury pool of people whose last names mostly begin with the letter A.

So far, prosecutors, defense lawyers and judges agree that the error has not affected defendants' constitutional right to a fair trial in front of a jury of their peers, jury Commissioner Pamela J. Wood said.

## Pole call

**CA** SAN FRANCISCO — The principal of a Palo Alto middle school may not invite a popular speaker back to an annual career day after he told girls they could earn a good living as strippers.

Management consultant William Fried told eighth-graders at Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School on Tuesday that stripping and exotic dancing can pay \$250,000 or more per year, depending on their bust size.

"It's sick, but it's true," Fried said in an interview later. "The



## Renegade umbrella

Charles Lindsey of Columbus, Ohio, tries to head to a bus stop through an afternoon storm.

truth of the matter is you can earn a tremendous amount of money as an exotic dancer, if that's your desire."

Fried has given a popular 55-minute presentation, "The Secret of a Happy Life," at the school's career day the past three years. But school principal Joseph Di Salvo said Fried may not be back next year.

The principal said Fried's comments to the class came after some of them asked him to expand on why he included "exotic dancing" on his list of 140 potential careers.

According to Jason Garcia, 14, Fried told students: "For every two inches up there, you should get an extra \$50,000 on your salary."

## Road over burial ground

**TX** CORPUS CHRISTI — Construction on an area road has been delayed partly because of its location on an ancient American Indian burial site, state transportation officials said.

"There was the potential for Indian artifacts all through this," Texas Department of Transportation district engineer Craig E. Clark said Thursday while speaking to the Rotary Club of Corpus Christi.

"They probably are ancestral to the Karankawas," Kennmots said.

Archaeologists will likely do carbon testing to date the artifacts once construction is finished. The burial site probably dates from 2500 B.C. to 1000 A.D., said Robert Drollet, an archaeologist at the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History.

## World travelers

**DC** WASHINGTON — Gray-headed albatrosses, famed for flocking to the South Georgia Islands near Antarctica to mate and raise chicks, routinely circle the globe between breeding seasons in a restless search for fish, British scientists discovered.

For a study appearing this week in the journal *Science*, researchers for the British Antarctic Survey attached electronic locators to the legs of 22 birds.

The researchers found that more than half of the birds flew completely around the world, following the chilled oceans below 30 degrees latitude south. One bird circled the globe three times in 18 months, and another flew more than 13,000 miles in just 46 days.

## Coyote killers

**ME** EAST MACHIAS — A competition to see who can kill the most coyotes was scheduled to go on at noon Friday in eastern Maine, despite protests from a humane group and request by the Baldacci administration not to go ahead.

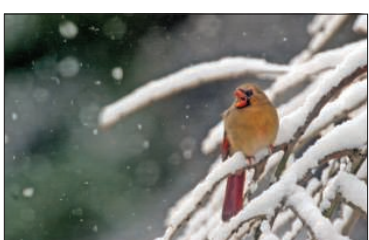
A dozen to 15 participants, some from other states, were expected to participate in the event, Maine's first, said Mike Look, an organizer of the derby and member of the Washington County Fish and Wildlife Conservation Club.

Look said he sees little difference between Friday's event and normal hunting of coyotes, which are viewed as a major cause of a deer population decline down east. But opponents say the event does nothing to manage the coyote population and reopens old wounds from a recent bear-hunting referendum.



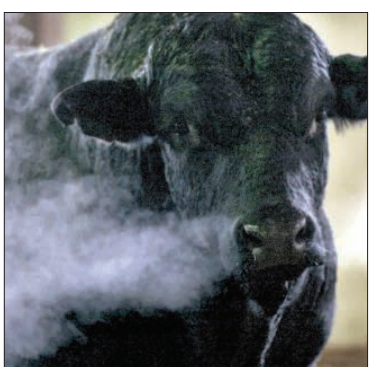
## Working in the shadows

Tom Thompson lays back for caulk, in Hays, Kan., during the construction of a new Home Depot store.



## In the lunch line

A cardinal waits its turn at a birdfeeder on a snow-covered tree in Clarence, N.Y.



## Warming up

A rodeo bull sends up a cloud of steam as he waits for the start of the 25th annual Montana PRCA Pro Rodeo Circuit Finals in Great Falls, Mont.





## Bitter cold

At negative 29 degrees fahrenheit, the rising sun colors steam and smoke from buildings in Great Falls, Mont.



## Breathing easy

Swimmers, from top to bottom, Robert Norman, Melanie Roberts and Will Dove, outfitted in their snorkels and swim caps, await instructions from Raleigh, N.C., Swimming Association coach Dan Flack during practice at the Pullen Park Pool.



## Better than out

As snow falls outside, a cat naps on a windowsill inside a home in Great Falls, Mont.

## Pilot grounded

**NV** LAS VEGAS — An armed AirTran Airways pilot was charged with operating an aircraft under the influence after a federal screener at McCarran International Airport smelled alcohol, authorities said Thursday.

Las Vegas police arrested Oliver Paul Reason Jr., 37, in the cockpit of the AirTran plane shortly after he passed through an airport checkpoint Wednesday night, according to the Transportation Security Administration, police and the airline.

Orlando-based AirTran Holdings Inc. issued a statement Thursday saying the airline followed its safety procedures to ensure the Atlanta-bound aircraft was held at the gate.

The pilot has been suspended from his duties as a federal flight deck officer, which had allowed him to carry the firearm, the TSA said.

## Healthy vending?

**DC** WASHINGTON — The vending machine trade association is launching an anti-obesity campaign to encourage healthy food choices, hoping to fend off efforts to remove machines from schools and improve the industry's image as concerns grow about the fattening of America.

The program, "Balanced for Life," is being unveiled Thursday at an event featuring pro football Hall of Famer Lynn Swann.

The effort by the National Automatic Merchandising Association includes a color-coded rating system for food sold in vending machines, indicating healthful choices and those that should be eaten in moderation.

## Triple trouble

**MN** MINNEAPOLIS — Roda Aden gave birth to twin boys Wednesday at Abbott Northwestern Hospital.

Nothing unusual about that. About 31 of every 1,000 live births are twins, according to recent U.S. birth statistics.

But Aden also gave birth to twin girls at the hospital in May 2002 and to twin boys in November 2000.

Having two consecutive sets of twins is highly unusual, said Dr. Steve Dahlin, but three is extremely rare.

None of the twins is identical. Dahlin delivered two of the couple's three sets of twins. What's especially unusual, she said, is that Aden became pregnant with all the children without taking fertility drugs. For women in the United States not involved in fertility treatments, she said, only about eight births in 1,000 are twins.

## Medical pot at work suit

**OR** SALEM — The Oregon Court of Appeals has reinstated a lawsuit filed by a man who alleged that his employer failed to accommodate his use of medical marijuana.

Robert Washburn's employer, Portland-based Columbia Forest Products, fired him from its Klamath Falls mill after urine tests detected marijuana residue. Washburn suffers from neck pain and muscle spasms that disrupt his sleep. He obtained a state-issued medical marijuana registration card 1999.

A Multnomah County Circuit Court judge had tossed out Washburn's lawsuit, ruling that the state Medical Marijuana Act doesn't require a company to make accommodations for workers with marijuana in their system.

## School OKs headscarves

**TN** CHATTANOOGA — A public high school changed its dress code to allow religious headscarves after a national civil rights group for Muslims complained to the principal on behalf of a student.

A spokeswoman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations said Emily Smith, 18, a senior at Chattanooga's East Ridge High School, wore her headscarf, or hijab, on campus for the first time Thursday.

Khadja Athman, civil rights manager for the Washington, D.C.-based council, said the group sent the school principal a letter Jan. 6, three days after the student e-mailed the council asking about her rights.

Rich Smith, an assistant superintendent for Hamilton County schools, said the school had banned all head wear, but the principal agreed to allow Emily Smith's hijab after attorneys were consulted.

## Shootings investigated

**TX** DALLAS — The bodies of four men — all hit with multiple gunshot wounds — were discovered at an apartment complex Thursday night. Police called the carnage "a disturbance that got out of hand."

Police found the body of one victim in the breezeway of the complex; three others were found in a second-floor apartment. All had been shot multiple times, police said.

Investigators were looking into whether the men became involved in a gunfight, and if drugs were involved.

## Animal cruelty charge

**HI** HONOLULU — An East Oahu woman has been charged with 25 counts of animal cruelty about a year and a half after authorities seized dozens of dogs and cats from her Hawaii Kai townhouse.

Lucy Kagan is scheduled to appear in court on the charges Jan. 28.

The Hawaiian Humane Society in May 2003 opened an animal cruelty case against Kagan after officials discovered 27 dogs and two cats living in what they called squalid conditions at her home.

## Bald eagle dies

**VT** MONTPELIER — One of the eight young eagles raised in Addison this summer to establish a breeding population of bald eagles in Vermont has died.

The young eagle died Dec. 26 after it was discovered struggling for life in the woods near Moore Reservoir in Waterford in the Connecticut River Valley.

A couple found the floundering bird while walking their dog along a logging road Christmas Day.

Evelyn Cecchini of the Outreach for Earth Stewardship, one of the groups working in the eagle restoration effort, said an examination of the dead bird turned up no obvious cause of death.

Stories and photos from wire services

# Christmas cards deliver holiday healing

## Sick boy's wish comes true 130,000 times

BY CHARLES ODUM  
The Associated Press

CANTON, Ga. — Christmas is still going strong for 14-year-old Nick Waters.

When the boy's church asked what he wanted for Christmas, Nick, who cannot talk and was born with no arms, slowly typed his reply with his feet: Lots of Christmas cards. Ten thousand of them.

More than two weeks before Christmas, he has more than 130,000 cards — and they are still coming. They line the halls at his home, along with the living room, and the kitchen, and every other room in the house.

"To see him the month of December, it was like a different child. His color looks good. It was the best Christmas ever," said Nick's mother, Penny Waters.

Nick has Holt-Oram Syndrome, a rare, inherited disorder that causes heart abnormalities and birth defects of the hands and arms.

This was the first Christmas in several years that Nick did not spend in a hospital, and no one in his family wants the season to end.

Friends and church members help handle all the mail. Each day, they form a cir-

cle in the living room with Nick in the middle, taking delight as envelopes are opened and each card is read.

Unopened cards are stacked waist-high in postal bins in the dining room, a closet and the garage.

As the cards poured in, Nick's family — including father, Charles, and sisters Tabitha, 19, and Kasey, 13 — filled in a map, marking each state where a card had been mailed from. South Dakota and Alaska were the last postmarks to pass through the door.

Cards also have come from Ethiopia, Israel, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Ireland, Australia and Canada.

Nick also received a package from the Secret Service, with photos of President Bush, Air Force One and White House pets Barney and Willie. He has cards from the Wake Forest basketball team, the NBA's Orlando Magic, the University of Georgia, Miss Utah and Elvis, who confided to Nick he is still alive and in hiding.

"He's probably touched more lives in a month than we'll touch in a lifetime," said Darrell Cheek, a Sunday school teacher at First Baptist Church in Woodstock who helped organize the effort along with members of Faith Baptist in nearby Ball

**"He's probably touched more lives in a month than we'll touch in a lifetime."**

**Darrell Cheek**  
Sunday school teacher



Surrounded by walls covered with cards, 14-year-old Nick Waters, left, listens as his sister Tabitha reads a Christmas card to him at their home in Canton, Ga., last week. Nick's other sister, Kasey, center, looks on.

Ground.

Church groups spread word of Nick's request through the Internet.

"He could have asked for anything," his mother said. "He could have asked for a swimming pool. He just wanted cards and mail."

Those close to Nick say the cards helped ease his pain. Nick has spent other recent

Christmas seasons in the hospital, fighting infections and complications following spinal surgery in 2000.

"This is probably the happiest I've seen him in four years," said Debbie Brineman, a specialist who has worked with Nick for seven years.

You can find out how to get in touch with Nick on the Web at [nickwaters.home.mindspring.com](http://nickwaters.home.mindspring.com)

# Mural's restoration revives question

BY RONNIE RATLIFF JR.  
The Virginian-Pilot

PORTSMOUTH, Va. — Joel Waterfield stood on a ladder, paint pen in hand, and stroked a simple line.

He looped and curved a few more lines that evolved into fluid caricatures: Marilyn Monroe, Clark Gable, Lucille Ball and Groucho Marx, all in tuxedos or evening gowns.

## Did a famous caricaturist do the painting in exchange for a meal?

Waterfield, a local artist, has spent several days carefully restoring the most vital details of the famous 30-foot-long mural at The Circle Seafood Restaurant. Local legend has it that Al Hirschfeld, the famous caricaturist for The New York Times, painted

the mural in 1961 in exchange for a meal.

Now, as The Circle prepares to reopen, the question lingers: How did the mural get there? And is it really a Hirschfeld? The restaurant is itself a landmark — it opened in 1947 at the corner of

High Street and Douglas Avenue and thrived for decades, even as many others faded.

The new owners think they can bring back the place's glory days. Rick and Keith Mathews will reopen The Circle at the end of this month. They're the sons of the late Stewart Mathews Jr., who started the restaurant with his uncle and a family friend.

When Mathews retired, general manager Jeff Clinton took over and operated the restaurant for about 20 years. Clinton closed the business in May amid financial struggles.

The new Circle will have good food at a reasonable price, catering to local tastes, with friendly waitresses, said Rick Mathews. He runs another Portsmouth restaurant: Rodman's Bones and Buddy's.

"We want it to be that place again where everybody has to say they ate at least once," he said.

For many regular customers, midtown hasn't been the same without The Circle.

A couple of weeks before Christmas, Jerrod Evans peered through a dusty window of the restaurant.

He shook his head and reflected on the holiday steak dinners his family used to have there.

"This used to be my spot. My cousin and my aunt worked here once. I said, 'I wouldn't mind eating at The Circle again.'"

The Mathews brothers will be bringing back another piece of The Circle: piano player Ray Brown.



Joe Waterfield carefully works on restoring the mural, which took several days.

Brown, a retired music teacher, began playing swing tunes and standards at the restaurant in 1968. He's an original.

But the mural — well, it's not. It's a copy of a mural Hirschfeld painted for the Eden Roc Hotel in Miami, according to Margo Feiden, a New York art dealer who handles the late artist's work.

That mural was so popular that it inspired a line of wallpaper, she said.

The wallpaper may have been the basis for The Circle's mural, though it's been touched up with paint once before.

When told about Feiden's judgment, Rick Mathews said his family would never intentionally mislead people.

"We've always understood it to have been a true story," he said.

The mural's origins don't really matter to Estella Jenkins, 85, who's been dining at The Circle since 1969. She remembers trying to guess who the characters in the mural were.

"I used to love when we couldn't figure out who was who," she said.

"Who cares who drew it? It was famous because it's in The Circle."



AP photo

Portsmouth native Joe Waterfield refurbishes a mural at The Circle Seafood Restaurant in Portsmouth, Va., on Jan. 3. Waterfield, a local artist, was restoring the most vital details of the famous 30-foot-long mural at the restaurant. Local legend has it that Al Hirschfeld, the famous caricaturist for The New York Times, painted the mural in 1961 in exchange for a meal.



## Sunday Horoscope

The first quarter moon is the cheerleader on your shoulder shouting, "Go, go, go!" An impending deadline doesn't hurt, either, and there are new consequences for not meeting projections. It's all extremely motivating, and under the last few rays of Capricorn sun, we have the discipline to make it happen without emotional resistance today.

### TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

**(January 16).** The opportunities that come along this day are once in a lifetime. You feel that extra confidence would help you excel, but confidence comes from risking. So through this month and next, risk first, and you'll have a winning attitude this spring. May is perfect for interviews and developing your public persona. Love signs are Pisces and Taurus.

### ARIES (March 21-April 19)

An uncharacteristically dole mood has you putting up with things you normally wouldn't. A remark here, a clutter pile there, a little bad behavior from the kids—it does add up. Resolve at least one of these issues by sundown.

### TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

When you deserve better, and you know it, make a fuss! If you don't, people around you think you don't care. Also, return the sweater you got for Christmas now while you're still within the 30-day limit.

### GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Friends look to you to keep them in line—what are they thinking? You're more likely to instigate mischief than to enforce rules. And for this very reason, you help people find their inner parent and take responsibility.

### CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Revisiting childhood memories unlocks a current puzzling relationship dilemma. Like it or not, your parents are your parents and forever more shall be so. So take a breath, and step into the past to figure this one out.

### LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Slightly sweet tooth, but the odds are you're trying to be perfect only causes you to poke and prod until you get the response you're looking

for—really. Say goodbye to hearts and flowers, and let the healing begin.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** It feels moral to think that social status doesn't matter, but down deep, it still does. There's a need to see fancy people in their fancy clothes, laughing at witty exchanges—and a greater need to be a part of it.

### LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

Loved ones spill intimate words. You don't hear this every day if you did? Absorb kindness instead of tossing it immediately back to the giver. Accepting compliments well is a talent worth developing.

### SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

You're called to defend your honor in some small way. By doing an excellent job on the minor scale, you're preparing to do an excellent job on the major scale. It's all important, if not you, then to someone significant to you.

### SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

The stars are like a giant cosmic vacuum cleaner lifting foreign particles from your life. But you love the foreign particles. Its disorder that makes life interesting. Let go of some dirt, and things will shine again.

### CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

It's time to do what you normally wouldn't. A visit to the fringe is inspiring. Besides, your relationships need ingenuity to thrive. To stave away the old crotch, try something new tonight—Bombaray spa potatoes, anyone?

### AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Family members clamor for your attention. If you feel like joining in the fun, go for it. But chances are, you'd like to focus on your career or hobby instead. Make sure to ask for what you need.

### PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your subconscious is a swift of activity. Write down your fears, your insights, and your dreams. Somewhere in the scrawl, there is a clue about a hidden health issue that needs your attention.

Creators Syndicate

## Caesar named for operation?

I've read that the term "cesarean section" comes from the belief that Julius Caesar was delivered in this way. What is the evidence that the term came from the belief and not the belief from the term?

The name "Caesar" is a cognomen, a nickname given to one member of a Roman clan and borne by his descendants as a title of surname. No one knows who the original Caesar was, but his descendants within his clan, the Julii, continued to use his cognomen and formed a major branch of the clan.

According to a legend related by the Roman naturalist Pliny, the first Caesar was so called be-

cause he was cut from the womb of his dying mother (in Latin, "a caesio matris utero").

This supposedly being a derivative of the verb "caedere," to cut."

This etymology is dubious, but the name "Caesar" has continued to be associated with surgery to remove a child that cannot be delivered naturally.

Evidence for the belief that Julius Caesar, the most famous bearer of the cognomen, was himself delivered in this way dates from as early as 1540, but there is no authority for this notion.

This column was prepared by the editors of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Our editors may send questions to Merriam-Webster's Wordwatch, P.O. Box 261, 47 Federal St., Springfield, Mass. 01102.

## Sister should not blame others for husband's dangerous antics

**Dear Abby:** My oldest sister, "Daisy," is married to an emotionally unstable man. I'll call him Dwight. Dwight's claim to fame is bragging that he can kill people with his bare hands.

Last year, as a family get-together, he grabbed my sister-in-law "Myra" from behind without warning, pulling her hair, getting her into a choke hold and physically hurting her. Myra barely knows Dwight. She was terribly frightened and ended up pressing charges against him.

The next day I called and asked Daisy about it. Her reply was that Dwight often shows off his "abilities" by grabbing people. Abby, her husband is old enough to know better. He's in his late 50s, but Daisy's attitude was "boys will be boys."

Because Myra pressed charges, Dwight was arrested. Daisy hasn't spoken to me since. She won't return my phone calls or acknowledge birthday cards and has generally been giving me the silent treatment for a year. It is right for her to hold me responsible, since it was Myra who pressed charges?

**Stubbed Sister in Burbank**  
Daisy Stubbed Sister: What Dwight did was childish and dangerous. Martial arts were

intended as a form of self-defense, not a way of getting attention at social gatherings. For an adult to have such a lapse in judgment is shocking, and he deserved to be arrested. Your sister should direct her anger at her husband, where it belongs, instead of at you. Myra was right to press charges. I hope it taught Dwight a much-needed lesson.

**Dear Abby**

**Dear Abby:** I am 41 years old and in my seventh month of pregnancy. I am a professional, the second-highest ranked woman in my office. I have prided myself on my professionalism during my pregnancy and didn't announce it until I was 21 weeks along.

One woman in my office insists on calling me "Little Mother" and rubbing my stomach. I am not comfortable with her touching my abdomen and have asked her not to refer to me as "Little Mother." I explained I didn't want others in the office to hear such comments. Today, in my office lobby, she again made the "mommum" reference and rubbed my stomach—with both hands. I lost it. I told her to stop it and leave my stomach alone. Now she gives me funny looks and says I am not happy being pregnant.

Abby, I have worked all through my pregnancy. I don't want anyone making a big deal of it. I feel the woman's conduct is unprofessional. I have tried hard not to let my pregnancy interfere with my work life, and I feel she is not allowing me the dignity and professional respect I deserve.

Where do people get the idea that rubbing a pregnant woman's stomach is acceptable? I wouldn't do that to someone I considered a friend, much less a co-worker.

Ditto for the "Little Mother" comments. Your thoughts, please.

—Pregnant Professional in Houston

**Dear Professional:** Believe it or not, your complaint is not unusual. I have heard from many pregnant women complaining that people they barely know, even complete strangers—feel entitled to touch their abdomens. I have no idea why anyone would feel entitled to invade someone's personal space that way. As to the "Little Mother" moniker—since you have spoken to the woman and she persists, ask her into your office and tell her in no uncertain terms that you consider her behavior disrespectful and unprofessional.

Letters for this column—with your name and phone number—should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box #9440, Everett, WA 98203. Please e-mail Abby on the Internet at <http://www.pittsburghpostdespatch.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

## Let veterans know they are remembered on Valentine's

**Dear Annie:** Year after year, your generous readers open their hearts to America's hospitalized veterans by participating in the Valentines for Vets program. This program encourages readers to deliver valentines to their nearest Department of Veterans Affairs hospital, in years past, it has resulted in millions of cards and letters for America's veterans. Last year, caring community members made more than 100,000 veteran patient visits, and hundreds more chose to become volunteers at one of our VA hospitals or outpatient clinics.

This success would not be possible without your support and that of your faithful and thoughtful readers. Teachers in schools, churches, scouting groups and social organizations have used this program to bring their students closer to those veterans who have served our country so valiantly, and gave them a greater understanding of our nation's history. In some areas, the students delivered their valentines in person.

What your readers loved with their caring notes and well wishes can have more power to give these veterans hope than any treatment or pill ever prescribed. At VA, your readers will also find, through volunteering, many op-

portunities to pay tribute to our nation's veterans. No special skills are necessary, just a willingness to give the gift of their time and caring to our veterans.

The 2005 National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans is just around the corner, Feb. 13-19. We hope your readers will again let

our veterans know that they are appreciated and that you are reaching out to encourage your readers to visit these veterans and thank them in person. Addresses of our facilities can be obtained by looking in the telephone directory, by calling our toll-free number 1-800-827-1200 or by checking our Web site at [www.va.gov/volunteer](http://www.va.gov/volunteer).

We look forward to another successful year of Valentines for Vets, and I know our veterans do so well. Sincerely,

—Montel Williams, 2005 Chairman, National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans

**Dear Montel Williams:** Thank you for once again giving us the opportunity to continue this worthwhile project, and one that means a great deal to each of us. We can never repay these courageous veterans for the sacrifices they have made on our behalf, but we can take the time to cheer them up and let them know they have not been forgotten.

### Annie's Mailbox



Every year, members of Camp Fire VA deliver valentines to our veterans, and Salvation Army volunteers distribute valentines, gifts and refreshments to various VA facilities around the country.

Teachers, you have always been extremely helpful and supportive in making this a class project, especially with those who have handmade valentines. Our veterans are particularly gratified to know that today's young students recognize and appreciate them. We hope you will encourage your students to be creative and let them learn firsthand the satisfaction that comes from doing something for others.

Readers, the veterans would be thrilled if you could drop off your valentines in person and visit for a few minutes. If you do not have time enough to drop off a facility to stop by, you can mail your valentines. To find the location of the nearest VA hospital, you check your phone book access the VA Web site facility locator at [www.va.gov/directory](http://www.va.gov/directory), or call the toll-free number at 1-800-827-1200.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime authors of *Dear Abby*. Please e-mail your questions to [annie@mailboxcomcast.net](mailto:annie@mailboxcomcast.net), or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Comcast, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

## YOUR MONEY



LATWP

When she had a cold recently, San Diego public relations manager Christine Benton called in sick to set an example for her co-workers. She says the lesson seems to be working.

# Sick day is healthy choice

## From vaccine shortage evolves anti-heroism work ethic

BY MELISSA HEALY  
Los Angeles Times

When a miserable cold struck Kim Colabella in early December, duly called. Her supervisor and several colleagues were out of the office, and Colabella determined that, ailing or not, she needed to keep things going. So she took a cold pill, packed up her tissues and soldiered on to work.

But when Colabella arrived at Corporate Wellness Inc., a Mount Kisco, N.Y., company that coordinates employee health services for other companies, her sniffling, red-eyed arrival won her a decidedly chilly reception. A co-worker followed her around with a box of disinfectant wipes, swabbing down any surface she touched. Fellow employees reared back in horror when she came near and finally banished her to her cubicle. The stricken office worker dared not emerge, even for lunch, and used the fax and copy machines only when she had accumulated enough paperwork to make a single trip.

In another year, Colabella's devotion to her employer would have been lauded. This time, she was as welcome at work as Typhoid Mary.

And her transformation from would-be hero to workplace pariah has a simple explanation: the recent shortage of flu vaccine. Most healthy adults — more than 95 percent, by the federal government's latest reckoning — are entering the flu season unvaccinated. The shortage and subsequent rationing have eased in some states, in California, for example, health officials have ended all age restrictions for the vaccine. At this point, however, most of the nation's healthy workers probably will remain unvaccinated through the season.

As a result, "presenteeism" — the practice of showing up to work sick — is now on the agenda of human-resources departments throughout the United States.

Whether it's a flu, cold or stomach virus going around, companies and their employees are realizing that it takes just one employee coming to work sick to spark a workplace outbreak and set off waves of absenteeism down the line.

"All of a sudden, people are talking about it," says Ron Getzel, a Cornell University/Mediant economist who studies the phenomenon of working while ill. "It wasn't in people's vocabulary a year ago."

Now, he says, "employers are realizing there are real costs to it."

This year especially, says workplace analyst Lori Rosen, "the idea of the 'hero-worker' that manages to punch in for a full day's work despite illness needs to be discouraged." Contagious workers jeopardize the health and productivity of all employees, she says. So their bosses need to emphasize that while they need their employees at work, "they first want a healthy workplace," says Rosen, of CCH Associates, a human-resources consulting firm.

As cold and flu season begins to take hold, companies across the country are issuing memos and posting signs in workplace restrooms, urging workers to wash their hands frequently, cover their coughs and sneezes, get enough rest and eat nutritious foods. Usually appearing at the bottom of this stay-well litany is an admonishment that few bosses have ever issued before, and many — even now — issue through gritted teeth: If you're sick, stay home, employees are being told.

And don't come back until you're better.

Make no mistake about it, however: This workplace edict comes not out of a sudden Ebenezer Scrooge-like conversion of bosses everywhere.

They're scared: not of the flu itself — with its high fever and aching muscles — but of an unvaccinated workforce decimated by it, causing missed deadlines, blown production runs and shoddy work.

Garden-variety viruses are bad enough, but the flu packs a punch that can last a week or more.

This past fall, 60 percent of the large employers polled by the Society for Human Resources Management said they were planning to offer flu shots or sponsor flu vaccine clinics for their employees this year. During last year's flu season, widespread efforts helped push flu inoculation levels among healthy Americans to historic levels — nearly 1 in 4 healthy adults younger than 65 got the shot.

But this year, virtually all such plans were scrubbed after government regulators condemned roughly half the nation's projected supply of flu vaccine because of contamination at Chiron Corp.'s British manufacturing plant. While 27 million doses were quickly set aside for babies, the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions, healthy workers have faced the flu season armed with little more than hand sanitizer and a heightened wariness.

SEE SICK ON PAGE 21

# New Year's chores for homeowners

BY HOLDEN LEWIS  
bankrate.com

Tune up your mortgage. Check to see if your taxes and insurance are being paid correctly. Get a carbon monoxide detector.

These are some of the mortgage- and housing-related New Year's resolutions offered by experts. You don't have to tackle them all now, but as a homeowner, you would benefit by doing most or all of these things at some point in 2005.

■ Give yourself a mortgage tuneup.

This resolution, offered by David Hall, senior vice president of Quicken Loans, sounds simpler than it is. The central idea is this, Hall says: "You can't put your mortgage in a drawer and be done with it."

Instead, he says, you have to view your mortgage as part of your overall financial plan, matching changing needs with changing goals.

Among the most critical of these changing needs: the time you plan to live in the house.

Hall thinks too many homeowners get 30-year fixed loans and waste money. Instead, they should get three- or five-year hybrid ARMs, which start out with a low rate that lasts three or five years, then adjusts annually after that.

"Most folks tend to live in their home a little shorter than they might anticipate," Hall says. "When you take a 30-year, you're taking a risk. You're paying more for your risk than if you move in three or four years, you've lost a lot of money."

■ Review your credit report.

"I think most Americans don't know their credit score," Hall says, and he thinks that should change. Check your credit reports for inaccuracies, too.

Confirm whether the mortgage servicing company is paying the insurance and taxes correctly.

If you have a mortgage, a servicing company is supposed to make sure the taxes and insurance are paid on time. Sometimes the company goes off. Call the insurance company and the county tax collector once or twice a year to make sure the mortgage servicing company is doing its job correctly.

■ Find out whether you should move credit card debt to your home's equity.

Home equity debt generally is tax-deductible, with rates often as far below those on credit cards. You can save a lot of money by paying off your credit card debt with a home equity loan or equity line of credit.

The surest road to debt is to consolidate your credit card debts into a home equity loan, then charge up the cards to the max again. If you do that, charge some nice clothes on your credit cards so you'll look presentable in bankruptcy court.

■ Make sure your homeowners insurance is sufficient.

"You should periodically contact your insurer to make sure you're covered for home improvements or increases in value and to make sure you're properly covered for any type of risk," says Gary Bierfreund, corporate president of MortgageIT.

■ Draw up a will if you don't have one, and make sure it's up to date.

This resolution is suggested by Neil Garfinkel, a lawyer with Abrams Garfinkel Margolis Bergson in New York. "You're never too young to have a will," Garfinkel says. Owning a home makes a will even more important.

■ Check smoke detectors and buy a carbon monoxide detector.

This is another resolution suggested by Garfinkel. Test smoke detectors at least twice a year; January is as good a time as any. A carbon monoxide detector could save your life, especially if you have a furnace that burns oil or gas. Garfinkel suggests getting your chimney swept, too.







## OPINION

## What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other stateside syndicates.

Open eyes on morning after  
The Spokesman-Review,  
Olympia, Wash.

In May, the Food and Drug Administration rejected an application by a drug company to sell an emergency contraceptive without a prescription. Against the advice of its own scientists, according to FDA Director Steven Galson said Barr Pharmaceuticals had not sufficiently supported its contention that women under the age of 16 could safely use the product, called Plan B. He also stated that Barr's application to limit over-the-counter sales to customers 16 years and older was inadequate.

Barr has reworded and resubmitted its application and expects to hear from the FDA this month. In the meantime, the most comprehensive study on the topic was reported recently in the Journal of the American Medical Association and it debunks the fear that ready access to emergency contraceptives, often called morning-after pills, increases the likelihood that young women will engage in risky sex.

But, of course, politics is the holdup. A conservative administration does not want to be seen as promoting promiscuity, even if that claim has been refuted.

Pundits' production is paltry  
The Hawk Eye, Burlington, Iowa

The Federal Communication Commission's recent record fine in the Janet Jackson case suggests that a bare breast shown on TV has become a negative effect on the national psyche than the screaming matches that pass for political discourse on alleged news programs.

And yet it's not the breast incident so much as the political pundits' constant shouting and screaming that has helped fuel a growing incivility in politics and society.

What's the evidence? Look at a strategy that bordered on lunacy to the so-called news talk shows. The networks, especially Fox, profit from the audience appeal of screaming-head hosts such as Bill O'Reilly and Sean Hannity, who happen to be wildly conservative and do their best to berate and silence their guests.

But there was an encouraging sign [this month] that the formulaic bickering format may be on notice. At least at CNN, where new boss Jonathan Klein fired conservative pundit Tucker Carlson and put his "Crossfire" program on hiatus.

Hopefully CNN, as it reinvents its political programming, will lead the way to a new (old) kind of civil debate that informs viewers instead of assuaging their fears and insulting their intelligence.

Pressed to preserve credibility  
Florida Today, Melbourne

In an action that showed no respect for an independent press or the American people, the Department of Justice last year handed over \$240,000 of taxpayer money to conservative pundit Armstrong Williams.

He was paid to tout the Bush administration. No Child Left Behind was in his newspaper columns and media appearances — all while pretending the propaganda was really independent and objective commentary. The purely partisan nature of the Williams deal was uncovered by USA Today. Williams was rightly dumped from his syndicate, Tribune Media Services.

Florida right now, which Monday fired four executives for relying on possibly forged documents in a "60 Minutes Wednesday" story about President Bush's National Guard service.

The Williams and CBS cases show the need for news organizations to maintain the



highest ethical standards, and hold journalists accountable when they violate the rules. The credibility of the Fourth Estate is at stake, and with it the public trust the news media must have to do its job.

Hill ethics policy out of order  
Journal Star, Peoria, Ill.

At first House Republicans seemed so magnanimous, retreating from an earlier ethics rules change that would have allowed one of their congressional leaders to keep his leadership position while under indictment on criminal charges. Even GOP leader Tom DeLay, whom that rules change was designed to protect, championed the turnaround. There were congratulations all around for their sense of fair play. And what did House Republicans do then? Why, they ramrodded through another rules change that effectively neutered the ethics committee that rebuked Mr. DeLay three times last year, making it all but impossible for ethics complaints to move forward.

Now a majority vote of that committee will be needed to start an ethics investigation. Thing is, the committee's membership is now split between the two parties. The votes, which seem more likely than in this partisan era, mean the ethics complaints die.

The 109th Congress will be a reform Congress, "House Speaker Dennis Hastert of Illinois promised. If so, it's off to a poor start.

Mandela's grief can help fight  
Amarillo (Texas) Globe-News

One might think that in the 21st century, society would be able to talk openly about anything. Not true.

Yet the acknowledgment this month from [former South African President Nelson] Mandela that his [son died of AIDS complications] might open the door to a new age of candor about an affliction that has infected more than 25 million people in Africa alone.

The lack of disclosure about AIDS in Africa and Asia comes from the shame many people still associate with the disease. Yes, it is caused by risky behavior — such as unsafe sex and drug use.

However, the disease has gone far beyond any behavior that societies still stigmatize. Children are being born with the disease. Women are getting infected by their husbands, who have sex with other individuals carrying the virus that causes the disease.

The more candor the world gets from lead-

ers such as Nelson Mandela about AIDS, the better the chances of battling a disease that threatens to wipe out an entire generation in Africa and much of Asia.

Please, no more silence.

Democrats unfair to Gonzales  
The Daily Sentinel,  
Grand Junction, Colo.

Colorado Sen. Ken Salazar, in his first week on the job, was at the forefront of a time national political hoopla. And rather than side with his own Democratic Party, Salazar apparently is agreeing with GOP President Bush.

Debate about appropriate techniques of interrogating terror suspects and treating other sorts of prisoners is certainly warranted. But Democrats are going to have a hard time gathering as much support as the hard-core Democrat when he has repeatedly opposed the use of physical torture.

If congressional Democrats choose to expose a greater sense of outrage toward Gonzales than they do toward people who enjoy participating in videotaped beatings, let them. That's a political judgment they are free to make and one that will ensure them many more years in the political wilderness.

Libraries: No-limit learning  
Chicago Tribune

Picture a city without a public library, where books can't be borrowed, where kids can't gather in a reliably safe and friendly place after school, and where computers are only available to those who can afford them.

Salinas, Calif., which spawned Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck, soon may be such a place, a city of 150,000 without a precious resource of knowledge or symbol of community.

The Salinas City Council, strapped for cash, voted Dec. 14 to shut its library system. The system — budgeted at \$3 million annually — circulates 4 million items a year and serves 1,900 people daily.

So what will be lost in Salinas, and perhaps elsewhere, if such a trend starts in Cali-

fornia and crosses the nation? Libraries are more than repositories of books, magazines, newspapers, computers and videos. They're places for children to learn a love of reading, for students to find a quiet space to study and for seniors to settle in a chair with a good novel or a well-thumbed daily paper.

They're open to all, equal access for public services. An inquisitive mind and a thirst for knowledge are the only keys for entry. Libraries are worth saving, in Salinas and throughout America.

Chertoff smartly homeland pick  
Los Angeles Times

Utterly humiliated by his first pick to run the Department of Homeland Security, President Bush has fallen back on a solid second choice, Michael Chertoff, a federal appeals court judge and the former head of the Justice Department's criminal division.

It's not an uncommon pattern in Washington. An ill-advised nomination derailed by scandal tends to focus the mind and lead to smart personnel choices.

Chertoff is known for his keen intellect, probity and the kind of tenacity that led the Justice Department to literally kill off the Arthur Andersen accounting firm in response to the Enron scandal. Chertoff is unlikely to have much patience for bureaucratic infighting or excuses that get in the way of strengthening the new federal department.

Chertoff is a loyal Republican but no ideologue. He was chief counsel on the Senate Whitewater committee. Though he never overstepped his bounds in that role, he should regret his involvement in what turned out to be a groundless vendetta. He was ahead of the curve on the terrorist threat, arguing in 1996 that law enforcement officials needed more power to track down terrorists. His suggestions raised some hackles among civil libertarians, and he later gave them concrete reason to complain. As head of the criminal division of the Justice Department, Chertoff was one of the architects of the Patriot Act.

To his credit, Chertoff battled at the time against extremists in the Pentagon and the White House who wanted to rely on military tribunals to try suspected terrorists. ... At his confirmation hearing, Chertoff should be asked to clarify his current thinking on the proper balancing of freedom and security. Then again, [when it comes to getting this unwieldy bureaucracy working effectively to protect the country, a tough prosecutor with a brilliant mind may be just what we need.







# Phil's first line of defense is its Pro Bowl secondary

BY BARRY WILNER  
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Terrell Owens is on crutches and probably finished until next season.

Randy Moss is limping from a sprained right ankle that has cost him practice time, but is expected to be on the field Sunday when his Minnesota Vikings play the Eagles in a second-round playoff game.

Advantage Minnesota? Not so fast.

While Philadelphia certainly will miss Owens, the team's most dangerous playmaker — and lightning rod — the Eagles likely can handle his absence because of their staunch defense. And the key to that defense is the superb secondary, which is capable of shutting down even a healthy Moss, Minnesota's most dangerous playmaker — and lightning rod.

"I think we are kind of coming together and getting on the same page," All-Pro cornerback Lito Sheppard said. "Maybe it is because of the type of year we have had so far. Everybody is feeling comfortable and a lot more confident."

"You have to go against the best in order to be one of the best. This is another opportunity for me and the rest of the secondary to prove that we can play with the best."



Game time is Central European.

Moss might not be at his best, but he wasn't completely healthy last weekend and he had a big game at Green Bay. He wasn't so effective in Philadelphia's 27-16 victory over Minnesota in Week 2, with a costly pass interference penalty along with eight interceptions for 69 yards and a 4-yard touchdown catch late in the game.

Moss couldn't get open deep against the secondary, which had been revamped in the offseason and had new starters at cornerback in Sheppard and Sheldon Brown. That secondary has jelled so well that free safety Brian Dawkins also made the All-Pro team, plus strong safety Michael Lewis, Dawkins and Sheppard are going to the Pro Bowl.

So the experience gained by Sheppard, Brown and Lewis as starters, and the leadership of

Dawkins, have been critical in the development of the defensive backfield, perhaps the best secondary in football.

"They've got a lot of confidence," defensive coordinator Jim Johnson said. "They might give up a big play, but you won't back off. They are very competitive guys. They'll come right back and challenge a guy."

They'll be challenging Moss from the outset, along with Nate Burleson, who stepped up his performances when Moss was sidelined for three games and parts of two others by a hamstring injury. But it's a matchup that favors Philly.

"We have come a long way in a short period of time," Dawkins said. "We have come to a point of trusting each other and knowing that each guy can do his job with excellence."

The most important thing on a football field, and especially in the secondary, is trust. You have to have trust that each guy can do his job and have a good time doing it and not have to worry about a guy."

Minnesota's secondary isn't nearly in the class of Philadelphia's, although Johnson praised Antoine Winfield, praised this season as a free agent. Not having to



Eagles safety Brian Dawkins is one of three Philadelphia defensive backs who were selected to play in the Pro Bowl this season.

deal with Owens will make things easier for Winfield and the other defensive backs.

But the Eagles have another prime weapon, running back Michael Westbrook, who creates mismatches against Minnesota's unimpressive linebackers and safeties. Philadelphia reached its third straight NFC championship game without Owens, then with San Francisco, and the injured Westbrook last year.

Now, the Eagles have a healthy Westbrook and a better defense.

So do the Vikings have an edge?

If they do, offensive coordinator Scott Linehan believes it stems from not getting blown out by the Eagles in Game 2.

"We've gone into that environment and put ourselves in position to win the football game, and didn't do it," Linehan said. "We still are a young team, and for our team to have that experience in their mind, knowing we've been there before, is certainly not going to hurt us."

## Plan: Patriots prepare for onslaught by Manning

PLAN, FROM BACK PAGE

The Colts also must face a star quarterback. Tom Brady doesn't have Manning's statistics but his results have been better. He is 6-0 in playoff games and 48-14 during the regular season.

On Sunday, NFL sacks leader Dwight Freeney will go after him. "When he is not sucking the quarterback and forcing him to throw interceptions," Brady said. "You have to make certain he doesn't take over the game after him."

Manning broke Dan Marino's NFL record with 49 touchdown passes while Marvin Harrison, Reggie Wayne and Brandon Stokely became only the fourth trio of punters to each have at least 1,000 yards receiving in the same season.

Belichick usually comes up with a new wrinkle to confuse the opposing quarterback, but Manning adjusts at the line of scrimmage very well.

"You have to force him into bad decisions and you have to make plays," Patriots linebacker Mike

### Indianapolis (13-4) at New England (14-2)

OFFENSE LINE — Patriots 10-5, Colts 10-5  
RECORD VS. SPREAD — Colts 10-5, Patriots 11-3

SERIES RECORD — Patriots lead 4-2-4 overall and 1-0 in playoffs.

LAST MEETING — Patriots beat Colts 27-24 on Sept. 9, 2004, at New England.

LAST POSTGAME MEETING — Patriots beat Colts 24-14 on Jan. 18, 2004, at New England in AFC championship game.

LAST WEEK — Colts beat Broncos 49-24 in wild-card game. Patriots had been beaten 27-17 in Week 1.

COLTS OFFENSE — OVERALL (2), RUSH (3), PASS (2)

COLTS DEFENSE — OVERALL (29), RUSH (21), PASS (20)

PATRIOTS OFFENSE — OVERALL (7), RUSH (21), PASS (11)

PATRIOTS DEFENSE — OVERALL (9), RUSH (21), PASS (17)

KEY MATCHUP — Colts QB Peyton Manning vs. Patriots' depleted secondary.

Colts' record in season with 49 TDs and 121.1 passer rating and threw only 10 INTs. Last year, he had great season, but was shut down in early that season, throwing four INTs in loss. This time, he'll face wounded secondary that used to be Tom Brady and in recent weeks, New England's star CB, Ty Law, was out on injured reserve last week and hasn't played since October.

Colts' coach, Bill Belichick, has been beaten in Week 4, Dallas Asante Samuel, Eugene Monroe and Reggie Wayne also have had injury trouble and team signed journeyman QB, Matt Cassel.

STREAKS, STATS AND NOTES — Manning has 10 touchdowns in last 10 games, with only coming against the Chiefs and Browns.

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## Tough Tice tries to alter Vikings' soft reputation

BY DAVE CAMPBELL  
The Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Mike Tice made a living as a tough, intelligent — if not as talented — tight end in the NFL for 14 seasons.

His three years as head coach of the Minnesota Vikings have been challenging and hardly satisfying, but he has clearly made an impression on this team.

"There have been a whole lot of games the guys left it all out there," Tice said. "They've left a lot of guts on the field the whole season. It's just sometimes they didn't play so smart and sometimes they didn't play with the confidence you need to win those close games. But they've certainly left a lot of guts on the field for me, and I appreciate that."

The Vikings visit Philadelphia on Sunday in a wild-card playoff game. After a trying 8-8 regular season, a loss in the quarterfinals of the NFL playoffs would hardly be a disappointment.

But expectations were much higher at the beginning of September, and a 1-1 record certainly suggested this team could do a lot better than the lowest seed in a wild-card game.

With seven losses in the final 10 games, Minnesota offered little hint it was capable of going into

Green Bay and upsetting the streaking Packers.

Amid national furor over the latest antics of wide receiver Randy Moss, who walked off the field with two seconds remaining during a loss at Washington, Tice brought his bunch together with a week's worth of training camp-style practices and motivational techniques designed to instill in the Vikings the underdog mentality they needed to win.

It worked. They jumped to 17-0 lead at Lambeau Field en route to a 31-17 victory.

"It shows the heart and desire we've got," wide receiver Nate Burleson said. "We've been through a lot of ups and downs ... Coach Tice always tells us it's not going to be easy."

Sounds as if the message is getting through.

"I always felt that the team should take on the personality of the coach," Tice said. "Whether it's a position coach or a head coach. I wonder why it took so long, I guess, is what I kind of think about."

"I wish they could've done that the last 10 weeks, but they didn't and we'll have to evaluate why that was. I know we lost some tough, close games, but I'm just proud of the guys because they accepted the challenge ... and performed like they're capable of

### at Minnesota (9-8) at Philadelphia (13-3)

OFFENSE LINE — Vikings lead 11-9  
RECORD VS. SPREAD — Vikings 8-8, Eagles 8-8

SERIES RECORD — Vikings lead 11-9 overall and 1-0 in playoffs.

LAST MEETING — Eagles beat Vikings 27-24 on Sept. 13, 2004, at Philadelphia.

LAST POSTGAME MEETING — Eagles beat Vikings 31-10 on Jan. 3, 1994, at Philadelphia in divisional playoff game.

LAST WEEK — Vikings beat Packers 31-17 in wild-card game. Eagles had bye, lost to Broncos 30-13 in Week 1.

VIKINGS OFFENSE — OVERALL (4), RUSH (21), PASS (17)

VIKINGS DEFENSE — OVERALL (28), RUSH (21), PASS (17)

EAGLES OFFENSE — OVERALL (9), RUSH (21), PASS (17)

EAGLES DEFENSE — OVERALL (10), RUSH (21), PASS (17)

KEY MATCHUP — Vikings CB Antoine Davis and Brian Williams vs. Eagles QB Tom Brady and Freddie Mitchell.

Brady has 10 touchdowns in last 10 games, with only coming against the Chiefs and Browns.

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playing."

The attitude, in everyone's mind, starts at the top.

"He's a hard-nosed type guy," quarterback Daunte Culpepper said. "He'll tell you better than anybody he's worked for everything he's gotten. Nothing comes easy. And that's the type of road we've taken."

# Chargers' Schottenheimer given two-year extension

The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — San Diego coach Marty Schottenheimer agreed Friday to a two-year contract extension with the Chargers that runs through the 2007 season.

Schottenheimer has one year remaining on his original four-year deal, which he signed in January 2002 and paid him \$2.5 million a season. Terms of the extension weren't immediately available.

Schottenheimer helped turn the Chargers from the NFL's worst team at 4-12 to the AFC West champions at 12-4 and won AP Coach of the Year honors. San Diego made the playoffs for the first time in nine seasons.

The Chargers were upset by the New York Jets in the wild-card round last Saturday, 20-17 in overtime. Schottenheimer's postseason record fell to 5-12 after his fifth straight playoff loss dating to 1993 with Kansas City.

Schottenheimer, 61, is 24-24 in three seasons with the Chargers.

"The franchise took a giant step forward this past season," Schottenheimer said in a statement. "This success is a product of every person in the organization pulling together in the same direction. I appreciate the opportunity to continue to build on what we've achieved together over the past three years."

General manager A.J. Smith said he'll now focus on new con-



tracts for Schottenheimer's assistants. Only defensive coordinator Wade Phillips and defensive backs coach Brian Stewart are under contract for next year.

## Whitsitt fired as Seahawks president

SEATTLE — Bob Whitsitt was fired by the Seattle Seahawks as president of football operations Friday, the same day Seattle VP Ted Thompson was hired by Green Bay as general manager.

"I decided to take a change of direction and bring in somebody with a deep background in football to run the football side of the organization," Seahawks owner Paul Allen said. "I didn't take it lightly at all, but felt it's what is needed for the franchise."

Whitsitt served as the Seahawks' president for eight years and helped negotiate the purchase and development of Qwest Field and the hiring of Mike Holmgren as head coach.

Whitsitt is the former president and general manager of the Portland Trail Blazers, also owned by Allen.

Whitsitt is currently recovering from colon surgery to remove a growth.

Seattle went 9-7 and won the NFC West this season, then lost to St. Louis in the first round of the playoffs.



San Diego Chargers coach Marty Schottenheimer, who took the team from 4-12 to 12-4 and the playoffs, was given an extension through 2007 on Friday.

Thompson will take over Packers coach Mike Sherman's GM duties.

The Seahawks have 16 players eligible for unrestricted free agency, including running back Shaun Alexander, offensive lineman Walter Jones, and quarterback Matt Hasselbeck.

"Obviously, we're a little short-handed at the moment, so we have to work quickly with the search," Allen said. "We're going to have to really address those issues quickly."



Heisman Trophy winner Matt Leinart announced on Friday his decision to return for his senior season at Southern Cal and try to lead the Trojans to an unprecedented third straight national championship.

# QB Leinart chooses USC over NFL Draft

The Associated Press

Matt Leinart wasn't the only college star to decide his future Friday.

While the Southern California junior quarterback opted to pass on NFL millions and stay in school, teammate Leta Tatuapua announced he will skip his senior season and enter the April draft.

On the eve of the deadline for underclassmen to declare their draft status, several touted players chose to remain in school.

Possible first-rounders Memphis tailback DeAngelo Williams and Texas defensive tackle Rod Wright decided to stay, as did Longhorns punter Michael Huff and Trojans punter Tom Malone.

Virginia linebacker Darryl Blackstock and Notre Dame defensive end Justin Tucker announced they will forgo their senior seasons. The San Jose State duo of defensive end Tony Ficklin and running back Tyson Thompson and San Diego State linebacker Matt McCoy also said they're turning pro.

Leinart could have gone to the San Francisco 49ers as the first pick in upcoming draft. Instead, he'll try to lead the Trojans to an unprecedented third straight national title and become the second two-time Heisman winner.

"I made a decision — I'm not looking back," he said. "There's something special going on here that I didn't want to give up."

Trojans coach Pete Carroll said the coaching staff worked hard to help Leinart and the two other juniors make their decisions. He said the coaches didn't "hit it on all cylinders" due to the loss of Tatuapua but added that the linebacker would remain a member of the Trojan family forever.

Utah announced that star receiver Steve Savoy, a third-year sophomore, has withdrawn from classes and signed with an agent, bypassing his final two seasons.

Williams, the two-time Confer-

ence USA offensive player of the year, led Memphis to an 8-4 season and a bid to the GMAC Bowl. The third-team All-American ran for 1,949 yards on 313 carries and scored 22 touchdowns in 2004.

Texas' Wright was projected by some draft analysts as a possible first- or second-round pick. At 6-5, 300 pounds, he was second among Longhorns defensive linemen last season with 36 tackles.

After helping Texas finish 11-1 with a victory in the Rose Bowl, Wright said he wanted to help Texas get back to Pasadena. The Rose Bowl will host the Bowl Championship Series title game next season.

"I thought about being someone, in some cold city by myself, watching this team win a national championship," he said.

Huff had 73 tackles and two interceptions last season.

Blackstock decided to leave after leading all linebackers with 11 sacks this season. He had 27 as a three-year starter at Virginia.

"Darryl played a significant role in a lot of games that we have won," Virginia coach Al Groh said. "He is a talented player, and we wish great success for him with this next challenge."

Tuck, Notre Dame's career sacks leader, was voted the team's most valuable player last season. The Irish defensive end finished with 24½ sacks, including a season record of 13½ in 2003.

San Jose State's Ficklin made the all-conference team last season, recording seven sacks and 17 tackles for loss for the Spartans, while Thompson rushed for 81 yards and five touchdowns.

McCoy was a second-team all-Mountain West Conference choice as a sophomore and junior for the Aztecs. He was second on the team with 90 tackles last season.

Underclassmen had until Saturday to declare for the draft and have until Jan. 19 to withdraw their names.

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# Poor putting costs Wie shot at weekend 15-year-old struggles on greens, misses cut by seven in Sony Open

BY DOUG FERGUSON

The Associated Press

HONOLULU — Her cheeks were stained with dried tears. A box of tissue was at her feet if she needed them.

Only after her week at the Sony Open was over did 15-year-old Michelle Wie finally get her age.

"I'm just going to go for some retail therapy," she said.

She might have better luck in the mall. The kid couldn't buy a putt at Waialae Country Club.

The result was a 4-over 74 in the second round on Friday, with a three-putt from 8 feet for triple bogey on her sixth hole that shattered her hopes of becoming the first female in 60 years to make the cut on the PGA Tour.

Wie ended on a positive note with a 10-foot birdie putt, walking off the 18th green with a rare smile.

All that got her was a tie for 128th, better than 14 men and the same score as Paul Casey, who four months ago was playing for Europe in the Ryder Cup.

She finished at 9-over 149, seven shots below the cut line and 17 shots behind Shigeki Maruyama, who had a one-shot lead over Justin Rose and Brett Quigg who played at a weekend at Waialae without his biggest star.

"I think I just tried too hard," Wie said.

The expectations were higher, especially after the she shot 68 in

the second round last year with birdies on two of the last three holes to miss the cut by one shot. It was the best score by a female competing on a men's tour.

"Missing the cut by one last year, I kind of took it for granted that I was going to play better," Wie said. "Last year, everything went too easily."

But she faced tougher odds this time around, mainly the strong Kona wind that came out of the opposite direction and made it difficult to find fairways.

Wie's problems came on the greens. She didn't make the birdie putts when she had them, and by the end of the round, par putts became tougher. And the triple bogey crushed her spirit.

"I was like, 'Oh, God, this is not what I wanted,'" Wie said.

"Missing putt after putt, your shoes kind of get heavier and it gets harder, because your confidence goes down. Then you make a couple of bogeys and I thought, 'It's just not my day today.'"

Maybe it just wasn't a day for youth.

Four players from the Champions Tour all made the cut, including 53-year-old Dick Mast. He qualified Monday, then tied his career low with a 64 on Friday and was only six shots out of the lead.

Craig Stadler (69), Peter Jacobson (68) and Tom Kite (71) all get to stick around this weekend.

Not so for Wie.

Her hopes came undone when



Michelle Wie can't get her putt to drop in on the 17th green during the second round of the Sony Open on Friday at the Waialae Country Club in Honolulu. Wie finished the round 9 over, seven shots below the cut line.

she was even par for the round, needing a 67 to make the cut, and her tee shot found the right rough on the sixth hole, blocked by tall, skinny palms. Wie found an opening and tried to play a low hook around the trees, but the ball never made it back to the short grass.

She left her wedge short, chipped over a hump to 8 feet and took three putts before she was done.

And then she was done. "I thought, 'OK, make six birdies instead of three.' I really tried out there," she said.

Maruyama made it look easy, jumping into contention by playing a three-hole stretch around the turn in 4 under par, an 8-putt to 3 on the eighth, holding the bunker shot for eagle on the par-5 ninth, and making a 20-foot putt on the 10th. He held it together the rest of the way and was at 8-under-132.

"I was worried about my game, first tournament of the year," he said. "I'm not nervous now."

# L.A.'s Gagne among 89 to file for arbitration

BY RONALD BLUM

The Associated Press

Eric Gagne, Lance Berkman and Ben Sheets were among the players who filed for salary arbitration Friday, joining Roger Clemens in the process baseball management hates most.

Clemens, who became a free agent after the season, accepted Houston's offer of arbitration last month and will be among those who exchange proposed salaries with their teams on Tuesday.

Clemens, who still has not decided whether to retire, is coming off his record seventh Cy Young Award and could propose a record amount in arbitration, topping the \$18.5 million filed by New York Yankee slugger Derek Jeter before the 2001 season.

Following the departures of Carlos Beltran and Jeff Kent, Houston might feel pressure to retain Clemens, who became a drawing card last year, his first season with his hometown Astros.

Philadelphia second baseman Placido Polanco and Seattle left-hander Ron Villone also became free agents and accepted arbitration. The other players in arbitration all have less than six years of major league service.

Major baseball unions dispute arbitration because it forces them to pay their players as much as comparable players on other teams.

Eighty-nine players are in arbitration, but many are expected to agree to contracts before the scheduled swap of proposed salaries.

Three players settled before the union submitted the filings Friday, with Chicago White Sox center fielder Aaron Rowand agreeing to a deal that guarantees

him \$8.5 million over the next three seasons. Oakland designated hitter Erubiel Durazo accepted a \$4.7 million, one-year contract, and Washington first baseman Adam Johnson agreed to a \$4.5 million, one-year deal.

After filing, San Diego right-hander Scott Linebrink agreed to a two-year contract that guarantees him \$2.75 million.

Gagne, the 2003 NL Cy Young Award winner, was awarded \$5 million by an arbitrator last year rather than his \$8 million request from the Los Angeles Dodgers. Owners won four of seven cases that went to hearings and lead players 263-197 since arbitration began in 1974.

Berkman, who is eligible for free agency after next season, tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee in November while playing flag football and is expected to miss the start of the season. Sheets, eligible for free agency after the 2006 season, was 12-14 with a 2.70 ERA and 264 strikeouts for Milwaukee last year.

Among free agents, outfielder Raul Mondesi agreed to a \$1 million, one-year contract with the Atlanta Braves. He played for Pittsburgh and Anaheim last year, but his season was cut short by a lawsuit that occupied his time and a leg injury.

"You look at it and stats up through 2003 and he was averaging almost 30 home runs a year and almost 90 RBIs and he's a Gold Glove caliber outfielder," Braves coach manager John Scherzer said.

"We really think he adds a lot of substance to our outfield."

Right-hander Chad Fox agreed to a minor league contract with the Chicago Cubs and would get a \$575,000, one-year deal if he is added to the major league roster.

# Real Salt Lake takes Besagno, 16, first in MLS draft

The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Only as Besagno could he think of a word to describe his feelings when expansion team Real Salt Lake made him the top pick in the club's first Major League Soccer draft Friday.

"Shock," Besagno said. The 16-year-old midfielder from Maple Valley, Wash., is the second youngest player to be drafted No. 1. Freddy Adu was 14 years old when he was picked last year by D.C. United.

"It's an honor," Besagno said. "The first draft pick's always the one everyone notices. It's just amazing."

Besagno played 20 games with the Under-17 U.S. men's national team and will be recruited at Real Salt Lake with former Under-17 men's coach Steve Ellinger.

## Sports briefs

"He has all the tools to be a very young star in this league," Ellinger said. "Knowing what I know, there's no way I'm going to let somebody else get him. That's why I had to get him with the first pick."

The first round was loaded with defensive talent. Seven of the top 12 picks were defenders, two were defensive midfielders and one was a goalkeeper.

Club Deportivo Chivas USA, an expansion team that will play in Los Angeles this season, selected South Carolina goalkeeper Brad Guzan with the second pick.

Chicago next took UCLA forward Chad Barrett. San Jose acquired the fourth pick through a

trade with FC Dallas and selected defensive midfielder Danny O'Rourke from Indiana.

## Judge dismisses parts of Neuhelsh suit, keeps core issue

SEATTLE — A judge threw out part of former Washington football coach Rick Neuhelsh's wrongful termination lawsuit Friday, saying he was not entitled to pursue his claim of defamation against the NCAA.

Nevertheless, Neuhelsh's central claims — that the university wrongly fired him and that the NCAA wrongly meddled in the case — will be allowed to go to trial later this month.

The trial is scheduled to begin Jan. 24.

In four seasons with the Huskies, Neuhelsh compiled a 33-16 record, including a Rose Bowl vic-

tory in 2001 and a No. 3 national ranking. Former athletic director Barbara Hedges fired him in June 2003 after he lied to her about interviewing for a job with the San Francisco 49ers and about his participation in NCAA men's basketball gambling pools.

## Walchofer wins downhill on Lauerhorn; Miller third

WENGEN, Switzerland — Michael Walchofer led Austria to a 1-2 finish in a World Cup downhill Saturday while overall leader Bode Miller was third on the famed Lauerhorn, the longest course on the circuit.

Walchofer covered the demanding 2.8-mile run in 1 minutes, 27.05 seconds — 0.09 ahead of Christopher Gruber. It was the first downhill victory of the season for Walchofer, the reigning world champion in the discipline.

Miller was 0.18 behind the winner and managed to take third despite skipping the morning inspection run. The American stretched his overall lead to 258 points.

## Goetsch wins cup downhill; Kostelic takes overall lead

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy — Austria's Renate Goetsch won Saturday won a women's downhill for her third victory in four days. Croatia's Janica Kostelic showed she is back at the summit of World Cup skiing after missing all of last season.

Goetsch posted a winning time of 1 minute, 37.27 seconds — 0.29 ahead of Kostelic, who took the lead in the overall World Cup standings. Lindsey Kilford of the United States finished third, 0.44 behind, for her sixth top-three finish this season.

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# Federer leaving rest of field playing catch up

## Men still chasing defending champ; injuries take toll on women's field

BY JOHN PYE

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Andre Agassi, Andy Roddick and Lleyton Hewitt knew they needed to do something drastic. Roger Federer was winning practically every tournament, and the gap between him and everyone else in men's tennis was growing.

Agassi tuned his 34-year-old body like never before, looking to gain whatever edge he could when he next meets the top-ranked Swiss player. Agassi, however, hurt his hip during a tuneup match against Roddick and it's not certain he will play when the Australian Open begins Monday at Melbourne Park.

Roddick, ranked No. 2, switched coaches. He ended an 18-month association with Brad Gilbert that had produced his first major title, joining former U.S. Davis Cup coach Dean Gore and overhauling his practice regimen.

Hewitt, ranked No. 3, tweaked his upper body, hoping it might help him end a six-match losing string to Federer that included the finals of the U.S. Open and season-ending Masters Cup.

"Roger has taken the game to a new level," said Hewitt, the former U.S. Open and Wimbledon champion who at one time led Federer 6-1 head-to-head.

Federer won the Australian Open, Wimbledon and the U.S. Open among his 11 titles in 2004, becoming the first man since Mats Wilander in 1985 to capture three of the four majors in one season.

Adding another title last week at Qatar with his 23rd — he improved his winning streak in four finals to 14 and stretched his winning run to 21 consecutive matches.

"To finish No. 1 and the way he did it is an incredible effort, but it's also become the standard that everybody is trying to push for," said Agassi, an eight-time major champion. "I'm thankful for those that

make us better, and Roger definitely does that."

Federer is flattered by the attention, but he's not letting it distract him from his goal for 2005 — start with an Australian Open title and finish with the No. 1 ranking.

"In a way, I enjoy it, to get so many compliments," Federer said. "I had such a great season last year — I guess like nobody had in 15 or 20 years — so it's normal that right away everybody compares me to the all-time greats. Now it's up to me to prove it and to be up there for a long time."

To remain on top, Federer decided he also needed to change. He worked with a coach for the first time in a year, spending two weeks in Sydney with former Australian Davis Cup coach Tony Roche.

He thinks a few tweaks already have improved his game.

That's probably not what Agassi and company wanted to hear.

After shedding 10 pounds to drop into the mid-160s and building his strength and conditioning, Agassi was primed for a shot at a fifth Australian title. Now he's at risk of having to join an injured list that includes former Wimbledon and U.S. Open finalist Mark Philippoussis and three of the top 10 women, and possibly more.

Top-ranked Lindsay Davenport was one of five players who pulled out of the Sydney International on Thursday. Davenport, who withdrew from this month's Hopman Cup to rest her injured knee, said she had bronchitis but expected to be OK.

"I've been sick all week. At some point you've got to stop. My energy level was about 30 percent," said Davenport, the 2000 Australian champion. "Hopefully, antibiotics and rest will all help."

Last year's champion, Justine Henin-Hardenne, and the runner-up, Kim Clijsters, didn't make it to Melbourne. Henin-Hardenne withdrew last weekend



Roger Federer's extended success has left the top players on the men's tour rethinking their games and adjusting their regimens. Federer is seeded No. 1 for the year's first Grand Slam, the Australian Open, which begins on Monday in Melbourne.

because of a knee injury. Clijsters has had a wrist problem for a long time.

Jennifer Capriati, who won Australian titles in 2001 and 2002, withdrew because of an ailing right shoulder that has troubled her since November.

On the plus side, 2003 champion Serena Williams is back after missing last year's Grand Slam opener and spending much of the season sidelined with injuries. She said she's "really excited about the way things are going in my game — it's a pretty big, open draw."

She and sister Venus, who have won a total of 10 major singles titles, have been working together in Melbourne.

"I get to play Venus every day — she's great to practice with because she's one of the best players out there," Serena said. "She hits hard, she serves hard, she runs fast, she just does everything pretty much the best."

There are four Russians in the top 10, all spurring each other on. Three of them won major last season and one lost two finals in majors.

No. 3 Anastasia Myskina was the first Russian woman to win a Grand Slam tournament title when she beat compatriot Elena Dementieva at the French Open in June. Maria Sharapova defeated Serena Williams in the Wimbledon final, and Svetlana Kuznetsova beat Dementieva in the U.S. Open final.

"It's remarkable," Davenport said. "I

don't think any country has ever had so many players come up and reach the top of the game like they have."

Myskina was upset in the first round by Chinese qualifier Shuai Peng in Sydney last week, but said it gave her time to adjust to conditions in Melbourne.

Sharapova, 17, beat Kuznetsova, Myskina and Serena Williams at the season-ending championships in Los Angeles to underline her ascent to the top, but she hasn't played in Australia this season.

Roddick skipped the usual warmup tournaments to concentrate on practice and play in the Kooyung Classic, the annual exhibition tuneup.

"I've had a great training period with Dean, felt better than I have in a long time," he said. "I'm happy with the team around me now. I'm very optimistic for 2005."

Agassi, meanwhile, will continue to treat his hip, hoping that at this stage he's not reduced to watching Federer on TV. For most of his career, Agassi contended in the majors with Pete Sampras.

Now it's Federer.

"I've played these guys on days when I'm convinced they're the best in the world," Agassi said. "Both of them bring a phenomenal amount of weaponry to the tennis court. Both of them have an ability to make you feel like a spectator, so you have to make sure you're at your best."

# Bryant to miss at least five games with ankle sprain

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Kobe Bryant will miss at least five games with a severely sprained right ankle, but the Los Angeles Lakers said they won't know exactly how long he'll be out for another 72 hours.

Bryant, hurt in the first quarter of Thursday night's game against Cleveland, was to be placed on the injured list and replaced on the roster by reserve guard Ron Babbitt before Saturday night's



## Briefs

game at Golden State.

An MRI exam confirmed Bryant has a severely sprained ankle. The Lakers said he'll be re-evaluated Monday, and an estimate on how long he'll be sidelined will be given at that time.

"It's all right," Bryant said Friday. "Very painful, but not as bad

as it was last night."

Bryant is the NBA's second-leading scorer with a 27.5-point average. He was injured when he landed on Ira Newble's right foot while going for a rebound under the Cavaliers' basket.

"We will miss him greatly, but this is an opportunity to grow as a team," coach Rudy Tomjanovich said before the Lakers flew to Oakland for their game against the Warriors.

"It puts a big bigger burden on me," the coach said. "We know Lamar (Odom) will get more plays, but I've got to call these things for other guys and get people in the right positions, because Kobe was in those positions and he carried a lot of the load."

Odom scored 24 points to equal

a season-high in the Lakers' 98-94 victory over the Cavaliers, raising their record to 19-15.

X-rays taken shortly after Bryant was injured were normal, but after the game he said he knew the injury was serious, saying it might take weeks rather than days for him to recover.

When asked Friday if it could be on the short end — like two weeks — he replied: "I hope so. But I've got to tell you, this is the worst ankle sprain I've had, pain-wise. I can't even move my foot. I have a high threshold for pain. I kind of enjoy it sometimes. It lets you know you're still living, but this one right here, I don't like too much."

"I think Monday we'll have a clearer idea as far as recovery time."

Bryant, 26, has played in every Lakers game this season despite having soreness in his left foot from plantar fasciitis. He entered Thursday night's game averaging an NBA-leading 43.1 minutes per game.

## Goldwire gets another 10-day deal with Detroit

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — The Detroit Pistons signed Anthony Goldwire to another 10-day contract Friday.

Goldwire, who signed his first 10-day contract with Detroit on Jan. 5, played in his third game with the Pistons against Orlando on Friday night. The 33-year-old point guard has a chance to make the team for the remainder of the season because it needs depth behind starter Chauncey Billups.

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# Hornets win again despite Stoudamire's 54

BY BRETT MARTEL

The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Dan Dickau's breakout season and Baron Davis' return to form have suddenly made the New Orleans Hornets a much tougher team to beat.

Dickau made six three-pointers and scored a career-high 25 points, leading the Hornets to their third victory in four games, 112-106 over the struggling Portland Trail Blazers on Friday night.

"I never consciously decided" to start taking three-pointers, Dickau said. "A couple open ones popped up. I just knocked them down. Then I got left wide open a few more times, and if you're a shooter you've got to take it."

Davis, who returned from a back injury in late December, scored 22 points, including seven key free throws in the final 1:03, to help New Orleans overcome Damon Stoudamire's 54-point performance.

Stoudamire set a career high and broke Geoff Petrie's franchise record of 51 points. The Portland star was 20-for-32 from the field and made eight three-pointers (tying the team record Nick Van Exel set Monday in Philadelphia), including one with 8 seconds left to make it 110-106. That came after Stoudamire was fouled on a three-pointer and made all three free throws.

Lee Nailon added 22 points for New Orleans, while Chris Andersen had a season-high 15. P.J. Brown had 10 points and 12 rebounds as the Hornets outscored the Trail Blazers 46-30. The Hornets had 19 offensive rebounds, leading to 25 second-chance points. New Orleans also out-

scored Portland 30-12 on free throws.

Van Exel scored 23 for Portland, which has lost six of seven and eight of 10.

But like the Hornets earlier this season, the Blazers have been plagued with injuries of late. Leading scorer Zach Randolph (right knee) was the latest scratch, further hurting a front court that had already lost Shareef Abdur-Rahim (right elbow) and Darius Miles (left knee).

That left the scoring burden on Stoudamire and Van Exel, who had little help as no other teammate scored more than eight.

"I sure wish we could have had an inside scorer today so we could have got a win," Stoudamire said. "We've just got to find somebody to throw that ball down low to who can take a little pressure off. In that second half especially, they were really guarding me and Nick and saying, 'Hey, let other people beat us.'"

The Hornets, who trailed by 17 after one quarter, had their largest lead at 87-75 when Davis found Brown underneath for a dunk late in the third period. Portland trimmed it to 91-85 on Van Exel's three early in the fourth quarter, and New Orleans' lead was down to 98-93 when Stoudamire drove inside and scored in traffic with under 4:20 left.

But Andersen hit a free throw after being fouled on an offensive rebound. He then tipped in Davis' miss to put the Hornets up 101-93 with 3:20 to go. He made two more foul shots to give New Orleans a 103-96 lead with 1:32 left.

"Baron's getting healthier ... He's just doing a great job of distributing the basket-

ball and leading the team right now and we're all falling in and hitting shots," Brown said. "After all the hard times we had closing out games in the fourth quarter we're doing a better job of that. We've got young guys maturing. We're just growing as a team and it's going to get better and better."

The Hornets (5-30) still have the worst record in the league, but they are no longer on pace to set a new mark for NBA futility, a distinction that currently belongs to the 1972-73 Philadelphia 76ers, who were 9-73.

The teams combined for 28 three-pointers, one short of the NBA record of 29 set in 1997 by Denver and Seattle.

And the game looked more like a three-point shooting contest in the first half, when the teams combined for a 23 threes—an NBA record for a half—in an exhibition that drove the crowd wild.

Portland was 7-for-8 on threes in the first quarter alone and shot a whopping 76.2 percent from the field in taking a 40-23 lead.

New Orleans responded by setting a franchise record for second-quarter scoring with 43 points and for three-pointers with nine, opening the period with a 10-0 run that included threes by Dickau and Davis.

Stoudamire, who had 30 points in the first half, kept Portland ahead most of the quarter by hitting three of his five first-half threes.

Then, fittingly, the Hornets tied it at 56 on Dickau's fourth of five first-half 3s. Boston Nachbar's three gave the Hornets their first lead, then Dickau's fifth three put



Portland Trail Blazers guard Damon Stoudamire (3) takes a shot over New Orleans Hornets' Chris Andersen, left, and P.J. Brown on Friday. Stoudamire scored 54 points, but the Hornets won 112-106.

New Orleans ahead 64-61.

Nailon's 18 footer in the final second made it 66-63.



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## SPORTS



Despite Stoudamire's 54 points, Hornets beat Blazers; Indiana topples Phoenix, Pages 30, 31



# Injured Pats seek coverage plan

BY HOWARD ULMAN  
The Associated Press

FOXBORO, Mass. — Stopping Peyton Manning is a huge challenge for a defense that's at full strength. Imagine how he'd attack a wounded team.

The answer will come Sunday. That's when the New England Patriots — missing their best two cornerbacks and perhaps Pro Bowl defensive end Richard Seymour — face the Indianapolis Colts' record-setting quarterback.

"We will go out there with what we've got," Patriots coach Bill Belichick said. "The draft is over."

He did add defensive backs Hank Poteat and Antwan Harris to the roster this week, and nagging injuries to other members of the secondary have gotten better. That doesn't make up for the absence of cornerbacks Ty Law and Tyrone Poole, both on injured reserve after being sidelined most of the season.

Seymour is listed as questionable for the playoff game three weeks after hurting his knee and then missing the last regular-season game.

Rookie Randall Gay and second-year pro Asante Samuel have gotten most of the starts at cornerback and third-year pro Jarvis Green is Seymour's backup.

"Guys get hurt during games and other people step up. It's not something that really is an issue," Colts coach Tony Dungy said Friday. "We've been through it with our offensive line. Guys have been out and rookies have stepped in and we've won. That's just the way you have to do it."

■ Minnesota's potent passing attack faces a tough task vs. Philly's talented secondary, Page 26



Colts RB Edgerrin James (left) ranked third in the NFL in rushing with 1,548 yards. QB Peyton Manning's (center) ability to call effective audibles will be tested in noisy Gillette Stadium. WR Reggie Wayne (right) was fourth in the AFC with 1,210 receiving yards. His 221 receiving yards last week were the third-most in a playoff game.

James and Wayne photos by KRT; Manning by AP

## Game figures to hinge on performance of New England's depleted secondary

The Colts probably will play without defensive end Robert Mathis, who has 10½ sacks. Starting defensive tackle Josh Williams is listed as questionable.

If the Patriots lose, their quest for a third Super Bowl championship in four years will end. Manning is 0-6

in his career against the Patriots, including a 24-14 loss in last year's AFC title game during which he threw four interceptions.

He had his lowest completion percentage this season — except for the finale when he played one series because the Colts were locked into the AFC's No. 3 playoff slot — on opening night in a 27-24 loss at Foxboro and was involved in two damaging plays.

With the ball at the Patriots' 6-yard line, he threw an interception to Teddy Bruschi on the Colts' first drive. On their last possession, he was sacked by Willie McGinest one play before Mike



AP photos

Coach Bill Belichick (left), 6-0 in the playoffs with New England, must make do without injured starting cornerbacks Ty Law (far right) and Tyrone Poole.

Vanderjagt missed a field-goal attempt that would have tied the score.

Another team that gave Manning trouble was the Baltimore Ravens.

Indianapolis still won 20-10 on Dec. 19, but Manning had his second lowest passer rating of the season, except for the final game.

"They brought different blitzers and mixed up who is coming and made us throw quick," Dungy said after that game. Forcing Manning to throw quickly doesn't always work, especially with a quarterback so adept at reading defenses with a group of receivers who don't need much time to get open.

"When you want the rush to get there is when the receivers are running their routes and the quarterback is throwing the ball," Belichick said. "The idea is to force the quarterback to throw at the time you have the receivers covered. If you can do that, then you have a chance."

The Patriots also must do a better job against the run. They allowed Indianapolis to rush for 202 yards in their first meeting this season, 142 by Edgerrin James.

"I think our defense's goal every time we go into a game is to stop the run and make the team one-dimensional," linebacker Rosvelt Colvin said. "But, in this situation, the Colts love to pass, so it is like pick your poison."

SEE PLAN ON PAGE 26



Indianapolis Colts at New England Patriots

10:30 p.m. Sunday  
AFN-A, AFN-P, AFN Radio

Game time is Central European.

Patriots cornerback Asante Samuel (22) breaks up a pass intended for Colts receiver Reggie Wayne (87) during New England's season-opening 27-24 victory.

**Second-round 74 puts emotional Wie seven shots below the cut and ahead of 14 men in the PGA Tour's Sony Open**

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**Bryant out five games with ankle sprain**

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**Heisman Trophy winner Leinart shuns NFL millions for another season at Southern Cal as draft deadline quickly approaches**

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